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The Srimad-Bhagbatam

BY
Mr. J. M. SANYAL

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THE
SRIMAD-BHAGBATAM
OF
KRISHNA-DWAIPAYANA VYASA

Translated into English Prose from
the original Sanskrit text.

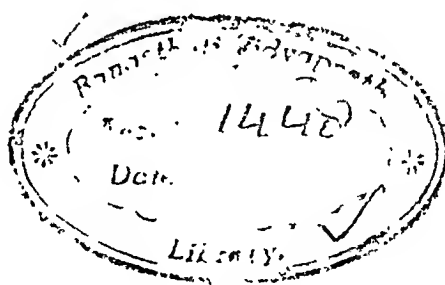
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FOREWORD.

The Srimad Bhagbatam was composed by Vyasadeva under instructions from Narada in order to attain that ever-lasting peace which he could not derive even after the composition of the Mahabharata and the compilation of the Vedas. Every page of the sacred Purana abounds with charming and ennobling hymns in praise of the Almighty God and the Purana describes the divine sports (lila) of the Lord in detail, so that even a mere reading of the sacred book ensures some amount of spiritual progress to the most ordinary man. This sacred piece of literature is invaluable to the adept who discovers in it all the secret mysteries of spiritual discipline (Sadhana), and pleasing to the ordinary man who finds himself absorbed in the charming narratives about the birth and the actions of Sri Krishna.

Like the Bhagbat Gita, it is a wonderful book of synthesis, and the narrow partisan spirit displayed by the Purana literature in general, is entirely absent from it. Jnana, Bhakti and Karma, are assigned their respective spheres; Karma is prescribed for the attached (Asakta), Jnana, for the detached (Virakta), and Bhakti for those who are neither very much attached nor very much detached and indifferent. It preaches *Bhagbat-dharma* or the religion of Love that is as universal in application as catholic in its principles, that is as safe as sure, as easy as efficacious..

The Bhagbatam declares incessantly that God alone is, everything else is not. God alone was before creation, He alone is after creation, and He alone will remain after destruction. God exists in all things of this universe and yet He transcends them infinitely. To realise God everywhere and always and in every situation of life is the be-all and end-all of life, and attaining God-consciousness, the

human being reaches consummation. The Bhagbatam tells us that the only problem for the seeker of truth is to find out the All-Pervading Being that exists always and everywhere, and shows us the ways for attaining the answer to the Problem.

The Srimad Bhagbatam is at once a philosophy and a religion, a practical guide and a direct healer. It teaches us that the One Absolute God alone is and that God-consciousness alone can yield salvation, shows us the way to attain God-consciousness, and attempts to fill the reader with God-consciousness at almost every page. It is really a wonderful book and it unquestionably deserves the widespread popularity that it enjoys. It is the richest treasure hidden in the bosom of the liberated, the incomparable solace to the disturbed soul and the Guiding Angel to the lost wayfarer.

The Oriental Publishing Company has undertaken a great and noble task. The rich lore that is embodied in the Srimad Bhagbatam ought to be within easy reach of all, and an English translation of such a work is no doubt highly needed. Such a great task can be accomplished only with the help and sympathy of the reading public, and I hope that sympathy will certainly be extended to the Publishers.

Dated, Calcutta, { N. K. BRAHMA, M.A., P.R.S.,
The 1st July, 1929. { Prof. Presidency College, Calcutta,

THE SRIMAD-BHAGBATAM

BOOK I

CHAPTER I.

Om ! Maharshi Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa, the son of Parasara could not feel full complacence even after the composition of the sacred Puranas and the thorough study of the numerous scriptures. Thereupon Devarshi Narada advised him to set his mind on composing a sacred book full of the glories of God. In compliance with the Devarshi's advice, Vyasa, the illustrious sage, undertook to compose the wonderful Purana, the Srimad-Bhagbatam. Before, however, actually commencing the composition, the great Rishi Dwaipayana, first of all, meditated upon the Most High in these terms :—

“Let me meditate upon the Absolute Truth whose Being bestows reality upon all created things, and due to whose want of support things like ‘sky-flower’ etc. are altogether unreal, who is the source of the creation, preservation and destruction of the Universe, who is omniscient and all-powerful, who revealed in the mind of the Prime Poet, the four-faced Brahma, the Vedas which the wise also fail to appreciate fully, due to whose underlying essence the unreal creation of the threefold gunas (Sattwa, Rajas, and Tamas) assumes the semblance of reality, just as there is the illusory appearance of water in mirage and crystal, and whose self-effulgence always dispels the darkness of ignorance which otherwise fails to find out His real essence.”

In this highly esteemed sacred work—Bhagbatam composed by the renowned Rishi Vyasa, is promulgated the ideal of a lofty religious conception which is the delight of the spiritually minded people who are by nature free from dross and untainted by envy. Herein contained is the blessed knowledge of the Supreme Good which radically removes the root cause of the three forms of miseries of the mankind. Other scriptural texts, though not altogether useless, take a long time in producing the correct comprehension of the Reality of God and prescribe arduous attempts on the part of their followers for the achievement of the same. Fortunate are, however, the people who would ardently aspire after hearing the narration of the Bhagbatam containing comprehensive knowledge about the Most High—the knowledge which immediately throws an influx of light on the mind full of the darkness of ignorance, and piously illumines the inner-most recesses of the heart and reflects there the beautiful image of God.

“O Ye appreciative and thoughtful ones! The Divine Sage Narada brought down from Heaven this Purana full of the glory of God—Bhagbatam,—the most efficacious fruit of the ambrosial *Kalpa* tree (capable of conferring bountifully anything asked of) constituting the Vedas,—and made it over to me. I then in my turn imparted this Divine Knowledge to Suka, my son. Thereafter Suka recited and circulated the Purana to the illustrious saints and sovereigns of mankind. Drink, Ye virtuous readers, time and again, the elixir—the juice of that ambrosial fruit—all throughout your life till ye have acquired the beatitude of final emancipation.” [1—3]

QUERY OF THE RISHIS.

In days of yore, in the *Naimisha* forest, the sacred land of *Vishnu*, Saunaka and other sages, with a view to acquiring the virtue of attaining the *Region* of *Hari*, set themselves in performing the sacrifice known as *Satra* which

was to last for long one thousand years. Once at the dawn of a day, Ugrasrava, surnamed Suta, of great renown, approached the great sages of rigid vows sitting at their ease after finishing the morning oblations to their respective fires. The Rishis present felt exceedingly glad to see him come of his own sweet accord. They paid due respects to him, and on seeing him comfortably seated, they very endearingly addressed him thus :—

“O thou stainless one, not only you have gone through the *Mahabharata* and the other various historical chronicles, but you have also properly explained and elucidated them. By the grace of the great Rishi Vyasa of supreme knowledge of the Vedas, as also of the other Rishis of world renown having full knowledge of the phenomenal and transcendental aspects of the Godhead, you too know in their minutest details all the scriptural works known by them, for the Preceptors are known to be unstintedly imparting the knowledge of even the most secret and subtle subjects to their dearest disciples. O Suta, you having thorough and profound study and knowledge of various sacred works of the three worlds do thou, accomplished in speech, now recite to us what in your esteemed opinion is conducive to the supreme good of man.” [4 - 9].

“O thou saintly minded one! In this *Kaliyuga*, most men are short-lived, idle in nature, dull in intellect, overwhelmed with adversities and afflicted with ailments etc., and so they can not be fairly expected to derive much benefit for themselves from the thorough study of the Scriptures numerous in number when viewed separately. Besides, the rites prescribed in the different scriptures are countless and are therefore impracticable to be fully observed during the short span of one's life for fully realising the desired virtue. Do thou, O holy-minded one, therefore, select and recite for the good of men the points of special merit in brief of all the scriptures, which will clarify the soul.” [10-11]

“O Suta ! It is indeed true that *Hari*, the ruler and guide of all faculties and things of the universe, manifests Himself in worldly forms for the protection, sustenance and benefit of the pious ones. And thou knowest for what in particular He was born of Devaki and Basudev. We are very eager to hear about it and it behoveth thee, therefore, to narrate it to us. In this world men are helplessly entangled in the meshes of attachment and fascination, but mere utterance of the sacred name of the Lord instantly emancipates them, the Lord who terrifies terror itself ; under whose protection pious sages moving in the path of virtue infuse purity in the minds of those that come in contact with their solemn association ; the Ganges flows from whose feet and floods the three worlds with sacred water. The good deeds of the Lord are glorified and praised by sages of high renown ; who could therefore be desirous of purity and yet will not praise or hear the adoration by others of the sacred name of the Lord which instantly sanctifies the sinful influences of *Kali* ? Oh the good deeds of God ! He in his kindness and playfulness manifested Himself as *Brahma*, the creator of all created things, and *Rudra*, the destroyer of the creation ; and Narada, the divine sage, and other sages of high esteem always sing of His glorious achievements under various manifestations. Do thou also narrate to us now the sacred stories of the incarnations of the Lord, and we are very eagerly assembled here to hear the glories of the Lord sung by you—good betide thee !”

“O thou foremost of the learned ones ! Do thou recite to us the various forms of incarnations adopted by Him under the shelter of *Maya*, His own illusive will. Insatiable is our earnest craving to hear the recitation of the glories of God, for the more we hear of them, the more grows our desire to hear them. Every one should learn the uncommon and wonderful deeds performed by the Lord in deeply disguised mortal forms as Rama and Kesava.” (12-20)

"Ô Suta ! Being afraid of the sinful influences of *Kaliyuga* that approaches, we have engaged ourselves in a sacrificial rite of long duration here in this divine land of sacred celebrity. We have enormous leisure to wait on you at ease to hear from you in detail the discourse on God and His glories. We were verily anxious to tide over the ocean of evils of *Kali* so destructive of all that is holy, and by the grace of the merciful God, you have been brought in here as a pilot. Suta ! We would ask of you another thing in this connection. Now that Sri Krishna the main stay of piety, and the coat of mail to religion, has merged into His real Divine Spirit and withdrawn to Heaven, do thou tell us, who now in mortal form is the main stay and protection of piety ?" (21-23)

CHAPTER II.

Ugrasrava, the son of Lomaharshata, being pleased with the aforesaid queries of the Rishis, and with due respect shown to them, began :—

"I do bow down to the son of Vyasa, the well renowned Suka, who, while roaming about alone in the world having taken initiation in Sannyasa, was followed and repeatedly called by his father Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa crying aloud 'O my son', 'O my son', deeply moved as he was due to the separation of his dear son ; who by his subtle power of yoga was able to respond to the call of his father by pervading his soul through a tree. This Purana is of immensely mysterious purport, the essence of all the Scriptures, and like a lamp dispelling darkness, it dispels ignorance of the soul and illumines it, and opens out the avenue of a religious land. And I do now 'humbly' take refuge with the son of Vyasa, the illustrious Suka, who having been moved by compassion towards the worldly-

minded people unfolded the deep mystery of the Purana. And I do also bow down to *Narayana*, *Nara*, *Superman*, the goddess *Saraswati* and Vyasa. (1-4)

“Rishis! Your queries please me much inasmuch as they relate to *Hari*, and are as such highly benign to the mortals. What else in this Earth could be more efficacious and pleasing to the soul? The Supreme religion of the people consists in the selfless devotion to the Lord, and not in the religious rites performed with a view to attaining Heaven and happiness. Devotion to *Narayana* begets aversion to the world and knowledge of the self. The knowledge of the self, sublime as it is, is free from dry and nonsense argumentation. O Ye Munis! The religion that does not spontaneously generate interest and earnestness in discourses on *Hari* is useless and absurd, so that even when duly practised that knowledge would not yield any virtue, but would end in toil only. There should be no worldly interest in the religious rites practised for the acquisition of Salvation. In the opinion of many, satisfaction of Desire is not the object of wealth. Satisfaction of the senses again could not be due to worldly enjoyment, for, worldly enjoyment is possible only so long as one lives. The goal of life is not, therefore, to practise piety for the acquisition of Heaven etc., the real aim of life being enquiry after *Tattwa* (the Truth). There are many who would confuse *tattwa* with religious rites; that is not, however, correct. According to the *Tattwa-jnanis*, *tattwa* is eternal knowledge of unchangeable merit. The followers of Veda would call it *Brahma*; the worshippers of *Vishnu* call it *Paramatma* (the Super-Soul); the devotees would name it as *Bhagaban* (Possessor of wealth and power). (5-11)

Sages having implicit faith would first of all follow Vedanta which produces in them aversion to the world, and then in their sublime soul they behold the Super-Soul.

“Therefore, Ye Rishis, foremost of the Brahmanas, when the religious rites performed by the people according to the

order of their caste-division, satisfy the Lord Hari, then only those rites bear fruit. For these reasons the devotees are to devotedly listen to, sing on, meditate upon and offer worship to *Bhagaban*, their protector. (12-14).

“O Ye Munis ! Who will lack in eagerness to listen to discourses on Him, through meditation on whom, as with a sword in hand, the learned ones would cut through the meshes or bondages of actions. By pilgrimage or by performance of such other sacred works, people serve God and thereby they derive regard for religion ; regard begets desire for hearing, which in its turn produces earnestness. Taste for the discourses on God drives all evils, for, those who hear discourses on Him, are saved by the Protector of the pious ones by entering into their hearts from all troubles within and without that are due to desire and lust etc. When all evils are eliminated and discarded through regular service to God, there arises unflinching devotion to the glorious Lord. At that time undue cravings and avaricious affections that are due to predominance of *Rajas* and *Tamas* cannot move the mind, and thus the pure soul full of spiritual fervour becomes translucent and remains satisfied. (15-19).

“Acquiring satiety through devotion to God, men disentangle themselves from the bondage of the world, and knowledge of the self or *tattwa-jnana* dawns upon them, and spontaneously with the advent of the knowledge of the self they meet with their real-self. The bonds of illusion forged by egoism fall off, doubts are driven away, and the actions that did not till then fructify wear away. For these reasons the learned ones joyfully devote themselves to the service of Vasudeva, the Lord of Power and Wealth. *Brahma* is the Super-Soul. *Sattwa*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* are the three natural influences. Hari manifests Himself as Virinchi and Hara. Yet good of all beings is due mainly to Hari, who is embodiment

of Sattwa. It is obvious that compared to earthly wood, inert and expressionless as it is, smoke is superior having the power of moving. To the smoke, however, fire is superior, for it is the soul of Vedic sacrifices. Similarly *Rajas* to *Tamas*, and *Sattwa* to *Rajas*, are superior, for Sattwa reveals Brahma. Therefore, Hari, the embodiment of sattwa and emanation of purity, is superior both to Virinchi and Hara. For this reason Munis of old meditated upon and worshipped Bhagaban as emanation of purity. Now, of old those who will follow suit to the Munis will also be doing immense good service to the world. In sublime serenity of mind the saints seeking for salvation reject the *Pittris* and other divinities, and worship *Narayana* and His manifestations. Yet, they do not bear any uncharitable sense towards any other gods. Those who are, however, themselves full of the influences of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, do of course worship the divinities mainly manifesting *Rajas* and *Tamas* with a view to acquire good graces, wealth and offspring. Vasudeva is the real essence and the ultimate object of the Vedas, Sacrifices, *Yoga* systems, Actions and performances, Knowledge, Meditation and religious rites. There is no way to the ultimate Good without worship of Vasudeva. (20-29).

Bhagawan Himself is devoid of any restrictive influences, yet all the creation issued from the essence of God in the beginning of creation, the mysterious power of this creation consisting in the active will of three phases personifying *Prakriti*. Thereafter all those influences formed Ether etc. and the diverse determinate existences possessed of His defining qualities showed to be emanated from His active influences. He is aloof and above all material restrictions, for He is an emanation of purity and the soul to the Soul. Just as the same fire glows differently in different objects, so also the Super-soul manifests in apparent variety in all things.

.. Pervading through the things of His own creation, the

Lord in the form of determinate existence—matter, senses and mind—enjoys the respective pleasures of determinate objects. The embodiment of Sattwa and the Protector of the Universe, Hari, revelling in His playful veins manifests Himself in all things and puts in the different nature into different hearts. (30-34),

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION OF THE DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS

Suta said,—“O Saints ! Being desirous of creation, the Lord first of all assumed the form of Purusha composed of *Mahat* (intelligence), Egoism and the five subtile rudiments of matter, or in other words the grand form was consisting of sixteen attributes *vis.* the five fundamental elements and eleven senses. In the Padma-kalpa (Kalpa is time, and the point of time has been denoted by the Pauranic name *Padma*) that grand form of the Purusha lay asleep looked in self-communion and at that time a lotus formed out of His lake-like navel, and from out of that lotus originated *Brahma*—the foremost of the Creators. From the contour of the Creator's figure the diversity of the universe was determined. The identity of *Brahma* in reality is transcendent of purity (Sattwa) untainted by Rajas or Tamas. Sages of profound knowledge and having eyes of insight behold that form of the Lord—Purusha—possessing innumerable hands, legs, heads, ears and noses, equipped with shining crowns and resplendent ear-rings. That grand form of the Lord is the eternal seed, so to say, of all His manifestations. He is the One Eternal Reality ever indestructible, and He is the origin and ultimate end of all His numberless manifestations, and out of His partial emanations are formed the gods, the beasts, the birds and the human beings. (1-5).

“Initially the Lord assumed himself as the Purusha, and there after desiring *Kaumara* (Celibate) Creation, He practised as a Brahmana the austere vow of Brahmacharya. Next to that the Lord manifested Himself as a Boar with a view to raising up the Earth sunken into an abyss. The third manifestation of the Lord is Devarshi Narada—the Divine Sage. As Narada He promulgated the doctrine of *Vaishnava-Tantra* (the doctrine propounding the science of Devotion to the Lord and aversion to the world), whereby men can free themselves from the binding power of Karmas (actions). In the fourth, the Lord was born of a duly married woman and in the form of Nara-Narayana, when He practised absolute self-control and austere penance. In the fifth, He manifested Himself as Kapila the potentate of the potent ones and revealed to Asuri, a Brahmana, the Sankhya system of Philosophy, wherein is promulgated the whole system of essential entities which was almost lost at that time. Dattatreya was the sixth form assumed by the Lord as a son to Atri as desired by him. In this form He clearly revealed the real nature of the Soul to Alarka, Prahlada and others. He was born as Jajna of Akuti by Ruchi in His seventh form, and with His sons called as the gods Yamas, He ruled during the Swayambhuva Manwantara (cycle). In the eighth the Lord was born of Merudevi by the son of Agnidhra and was known as Rishava, who revealed to the learned ones the path of the pious known as Paramahansa, the path held in reverence and awe by all orders of sages. (6-13).

“O Brahmanas! Prithu was the ninth form of Narayana. As prayed for by the Rishis, the Lord in this form was born as a King and brought into light various precious gems and efficacious plants out of the Earth, and for this reason this manifestation of the Lord is known as the fairest of all.

Thereafter in the *Chakshusha* cycle when the Earth

was sunken in the dreadful deluge, the Lord in the tenth incarnation assumed the form of a Fish and saved Vaivaswata Manu by embarking him on a Boat which was in reality the Earth itself. In His eleventh incarnation the Lord assumed the form of a Tortoise and supported on its back the Mandara mountain wherewith the gods and the Asuras churned the ocean. The Lord assumed His twelfth incarnation as Dhanvantari and issued forth from the depth of the ocean with a pot of Amrita (Nectar) in hand. In the thirteenth He assumed the form of a beautiful lady known as *Mohini* (that which infatuates) and by the infatuating of the Asuras with the bewitching beauty of the female form, He gratified the gods with delicious draughts of nectar. The Lord assumed his fourteenth form as Narasingha. Just as a rope-maker tears *Eraka* grass to make rope with, Hari in the form of a Narasingha (half man, half lion) placed the over-proud lord of Demons, Hiranyakasipu, on His own thighs and tore him to pieces even with His nails. (14-18).

In the fifteenth incarnation the Lord assumed the form a Dwarf, and in that puny form He appeared at the sacrificial ceremony undertaken by Vali ; and with a view to tactfully recovering the three regions of the universe from the domination of Vali, He prayed for only three paces of earth. In the sixteenth incarnation the Lord was known as Parasurama, who being enraged at the insulting attitude of the Kshatriya-kings towards the Brahmanas, stripped the world of the kshatriyas as many as three times seven. In the seventeenth the Lord was born as Vyasa of Satyabati by Parasara, and perceiving the dull intellect and short retentive power of the then people, he divided the tree of the Vedas in different branches. In the eighteenth manifestation the Lord was Maharaja Ramachandra, the eldest son of Dasaratha and performed many uncommon feats such as building bridge over the sea etc. to serve the purposes of the gods.

Thereafter in the nineteenth incarnation being desirous lightening the burden of the Earth the Lord assumed form of Rama-Krishna. Now that the Kali-juga has set with a view to delude the demons, the Lord will be assuming the form of Buddha, as the son of Anjana in neighbourhood of Gaya. In the long last at the expiry of the Kali-juga, when the kings will be found to be behaving as highwaymen, Narayana will be assuming the form of Kalki, as a son to a Brahmana Vishnujasha by name. (19-25).

“O Saints! Innumerable are the incarnations of the Lord, the fountain-head of sattwa, the spring of purity, and how can I exhaustibly narrate them to the end? Just as innumerable streams issue out of one lake of unending waters, from Parameswara, the One Absolute emanation of sattwa, numberless incarnations are formed. *Prajapati* the Lord of the universe, the gods, the sages and *Manu* with his sons are but emanations of Hari. Of all the manifestations referred to above, some are parts of God Himself and the others are but His emanations; but the incarnation of Sri-Krishna is identical with the Lord Himself. When the demons, the enemies of Indra, the king of Gods assume themselves in mortal forms in the Earth and oppress the humanity, Hari manifests Himself as afore-said in various incarnations in different cycles to save the oppressed ones. The devout who with pure mind devotedly recite at dawn and in the evening the names of the different mysterious incarnations of the Lord, attain salvation from the bondage of the world full of miseries of all sorts. The soul of the individual (Jiva) is noumenal in reality, and its existence rests only on knowledge. The universe form or phenomena is formed by the Lord through His own active illusory will. A mass of clouds hover over the upper stratum of air but the ignorant people wrongly take it to be ethereal sky itself merely for the fact of its floating

in the ether, and the gray colour of earthly dust is wrongly attributed to the air by which the dust is carried. Similarly, due to ignorance, men ascribe form to the Soul which is in reality devoid of any form. (26-31).

“O best of Brahmanas! Ignorant men do not only conceive subtle form of the Jiva-soul, but also ascribe to it gross physical body. The soul has no form whatsoever, neither is it visible or audible, but for this reason the existence of soul, however, cannot be altogether denied, as by the subtle conception of it the title and existence of the soul is imaginable. Again, even though the existence of the soul can be admitted through its crude form as Jiva-soul, yet without the conception of the subtle form transmigration of the Jiva-soul cannot follow; so that the subtle form must be admitted. Due to mist of illusion both crude and subtle forms are attributed to the soul. When knowledge of self dispels the mist of illusion and removes error, then only the Jiva (creature) can understand his real self to be identical with the Omniscient Brahman, the Great-Soul. So long as the Jiva-soul is under the illusory influence of wonder-making *Māyā* (the celestial maiden personifying the active will of God) the mist of illusion remains; but when that illusion is changed into knowledge of the self, the error of crude and subtle form of the soul subsides, and Jiva-soul merges into the Great-Soul and shines in its native effulgence and glory. The Omniscient Lord has no bond of action or birth; but the learned ones say that under cover of *Māyā* the Lord assumes mysterious birth and works wonders, yet He being verily distinguishable from the Jiva (of His own creation) The Lord creates, preserves and destroys the universe with ease, He awake in all hearts, and at will tastes the pleasures of the senses at the same time not being concerned in anything, for He is independent and Himself is the regulator of the six senses. (32-36).

“Evil-natured men led by their erroneous reasons cannot understand the utility of His playful ways. The Lord is like an actor in a stage. By thought and speech He gives birth to forms and sings on the glory of names. How can ignorant men understand His glory? It is only His devotee who meditates ever with deep concentration upon the Lord holding the irresistibly destructive wheel (*Chakra*, more commonly called ‘Sudarsan-chakra’) in His hand that knows a bit about Him. Blessed are ye Rishis, for you have the unflinching devotion on Vasudeva. Jivas having such devotion to Narayana do not suffer the dreadful miseries of births. O Munis! Vyasa composed this blessed Purana equal in merit to all the Vedas taken together, containing the essence of all Puranas and Historical works and conducive to supreme good of the universe. First of all Vyasa taught this Purana to his own son Suka, the best of disciplinants. Herein has been narrated in detail the sacred incidents performed by the glorious Lord. When Maharaja Parikshit being determined to die by fasting sat on the bank of the Ganges, being surrounded by Brahmanas, Suka recited the Purana to him. At the advent of Kali-juga Sri Krishna withdrew to His own celestial abode in company with Piety and Knowledge (personified) and therefore all men have been blinded by the darkness of ignorance and to dispel which the Sun of this Purana has risen. O Sages! When Suka of immeasurable power was reciting this Bhagbata Purana to Maharaja Parikshit, through his grace I was in that assembly of Brahmanas and listened to it from the beginning to the end with wrapt attention. And I do now recite the said sacred Purana unto you from my memory exactly as I had heard it. (37-45).

CHAPTER IV.

APPROACH OF NARADA.

On hearing the aforesaid words of Suta,—Saunaka, the follower of Rigveda and the oldest and the foremost of the sages engaged in that sacrificial rite of long duration, showed all eagerness and spoke as follows :—

“O Suta ! O best of speakers ! Do thou now recite to us the sacred discourse about the Lord, which illustrious Sukdeva had formerly recited. At what time the Bhagbata was for the first time brought to light ? Where and why Krishna-Dwaipayana composed this Bhagbata-Samhita ? By whom was Vyasa impelled to undertake the composition ? Sukdeva, the son of Vyasa is one of the best of yogins, knower of Brahman and devoid of the sense of distinction. His concentration is unflinchingly fixed only on the Most High. He is never overwhelmed with illusion of *Maya*, and for this reason others take him to be ignorant and idiotic. I have heard that when Sukdeva went out on pilgrimage in a naked state and was passing by a lake, some *Apsaras* (celestial nymphs) were sporting in the water of the lake. The nymphs did not display any flutter of shame at the sight of Sukdeva who was naked, but when Vyasa, though clothed, arrived at the place in pursuit of his son, the nymphs hurriedly got up from the water and put on their respective clothes. Thereupon the Maharshi was much surprised and said,—“What is the cause of this your strange behaviour ? Suka was naked, but you did not show any flutter at his sight, whereas though I am clothed you seem to be blushing at my sight.” Thus asked by Vyasa, the nymphs answered, “Venerable sage ! You are alive to the distinction of sexes, but your son Suka has no such knowledge of distinction.” (1-5).

Suta ! How was Suka led to the *Kurujāṅgal* (belonging to the Kurus) territories at first and to Hastinapura therefrom, in course of his wandering like a lunatic, when he feigned to be deaf and dumb ? How could the citizens recognise him ? How did the conversation come about between Suka and Parikshit, the worthy scion of the glorious Pandavas ? Suka was known to be occasionally arriving at and thereby sanctifying the abode of householders, but he was not in the habit of staying at any place for a long time. He used to stay at a place only for so long as would be required to milk a cow. It seems strange, therefore, as to how he recited the Bhagbata Purana. Suta ! Do thou now recite to us the wonderful incidents of the birth of Parikshit, the son of Abhimanyu, to whom Suka is reported to have recited the Purana. Why did that king of kings, the glory of the Pandu family, renounce the glory of the Empire with its wealth and happiness, and arrive at the bank of the Ganges determined to starve himself to death ? Even the kings of repute, though inimical to him, being solicitous of their own welfare used to offer him precious presents. But why did he whole-heartedly make up his mind to give up the Imperial honour and prosperity even in his youth ? No king, however, can do this. Persons desiring fame and devoted to God do not live for themselves, but they devote their lives to the wealth, prosperity and welfare of the world at large. Why did Parikshit, then, being himself devoted to God and being the stay of innumerable people, resolve to die ? Suta ! We presume you are versed in everything but the Vedas, and do you now speak about all that we have asked. (6-13).'

On these words of Saunaka, Suta said, "By the revolution of the wheel of time when Dwapara, the third cycle, approached,—as a partial emanation of Hari the sage Vyasa was born of Satyabati, the daughter of Vasu, by Parasara. One day the son of Parasara, the knower of

the past and the future, performed his ablutions and morning prayers in the waters of the Saraswati just after sun-rise, and sat in a lonely place deeply absorbed in mind in the Badarikasrama. At that time the then condition of the world flashed upon his mind. Through his perfect knowledge he saw that with the mysterious and speedy whirling of time the duties of the different cycles are being conglomerated, and thereby the crude forms of beings were losing powers. Men have not their former devotion to the gods. Their patience is no more and their intelligence weakened. Their span of life has been shortened and they have been beset with misfortunes. He then weighed in his mind as to what was likely to be conducive to the all-round welfare of all the castes. (14-18).

Vyasa, the illustrious sage of profound knowledge then decided that rites prescribed in the Vedas if performed by the priests of four different schools could effect purification of the soul. Accordingly he divided the Veda into four *viz.* the Rig, the Yajus, the Saman and the Atharvan. Itihasas (Histories) and the Puranas are termed as the Fifth Veda. Of the aforesaid Four Vedas,—the sage Paila studied and obtained mastery over the Rig, Jaimini the Saman, Baishampayana the Yajus and the sage Sumantu adept in the art of spell studied and mastered the Atharvan. My father Lomaharshana became versed in the Itihasas and Puranas. Those sages divided their respective Vedas into different sections and taught them to their respective disciples and those disciples again in their turn taught them to their disciples. Thus each of the Vedas has been ramified into innumerable branches. (19-24).

Poorly-gifted men now-a-days study these branches. Divine Vyasa, therefore, so divided the Vedas being moved with pity towards the poorly-gifted ones. The degenerated twice-borns, the Sudras and women are barred from the holy truths of the Vedas, and out of

compassion for them Maharshi Vyasa composed the Mahabharata. But, O Brahmanas, the pious sage could not find satisfaction even after composing these works for the welfare of beings, and he thus argued within him sitting on the sacred bank of Saraswati : "I have offered due worship to the Vedas, to my Preceptor and the Fire God strictly adhering to austere vows. I have never transgressed their injunctions and in the composition of Bharata I have presented the sum and substance of all the Vedas, so that therefrom the women and the Sudras and the sects in the still lower category can understand what is real religion or otherwise. But, Alas ! Even though my Jiva-soul is full of the transcendent joys it looks imperfect and untrue in contrast with the shining splendour of Brahman. I have not been able to satisfy the Paramahansas by my special discourses on the Lord in the Bharata etc. Is my dissatisfaction due to that ?" Maharshi Krishna-Dwaipayana was thus thinking in self-despising mood sitting on the bank of the Saraswati, when Narada, worshipped by the gods, came to him. On seeing that best of the devouts, Vyasa immediately rose from his seat and paid him due honours. (25-33).

CHAPTER V.

INTERVIEW BETWEEN NARADA AND VYASA.

Suta said,—“Saints ! Afterwards Narada, the Divine-sage of wide fame, comfortably seated and with smiles upon his lips thus addressed Vyasa, who was seated close by :—
 “O son of Parasara of good grace ! Are you faring well bodily and mentally ? Have you been able to fully comprehend what is right or wrong in religious matters ? Have you been practising all religious rites without any difficulty ? I presume everything is being done by you

properly, for, you have composed Mahabharata which is full of the religious purport of all different scriptures, and as such deemed to be a unique work. You have solved the mysteries of the nature of eternal Brahman, and realised the Absolute Truth. Why then have you been bewailing like an unsuccessful person ?' (1-4).

Thereupon Vyasa replied : "O Divine-sage ! Indeed your presumption about myself is correct, yet my soul knows no bodily or mental satisfaction. I do not, however, know the real cause of this dissatisfaction. You have been born of Brahma himself, and your knowledge knows no bound. I, therefore, enquire of thee about the real cause of my discontent. You know the real significance of all mysteries, for you worship that Prime Person who is the cause of creation, preservation and destruction of the universe and who controls causes and effects. Like the Sun you are going round the three regions of the world, and like air entering into men's hearts and knowing their thoughts, so that I request you to explain to me fully all about me. Why my soul is not enjoying undisturbed peace although I have been able to realise Absolute truth through my power of yoga and have become versed in the Vedas by thorough study."

In reply to the above words of Vyasa, Narada began,—
"Vyasa ! You have not discoursed on the holiness and glory of the Lord in detail. In Bharata and other works indeed you have exhaustively recounted everything about religion and about what is not religion, but you have not done so about the glories of Vasudeva. Practising religious rites without dwelling upon the glories of the Lord does not please Him. (5-9).

"A discourse though of delightful composition, yet without the wonderful glories of the Lord is supposed to attract selfish and low-minded people only. Just as swans would discard foul sink for crows and sport in the clear waters of Manas-Sarobar (a lake of that name having transparent

water and known to be revelled in by Gods and celestial beings), so also people full of sattwa or purity, referred to in scriptural language as 'Parama-hansa', would attach little value to the so-called selfish discourse and on the contrary would dive deep into spiritual works full of sanctifying renown of the Lord and thereby their souls remain ever in communion with Him. A work, in every sloka of which the unending glory of the Lord has been sung, can destroy sins of men, and it is therefore that holy men hear, recite and sing the sanctifying pure name of the Lord. Even knowledge or actual realisation of Brahman that is free from all misconception and false distinction does not shine as it should if dissociated from God. Need it be said that actions actuated through desire or otherwise if not dedicated to the Lord cannot be of any beneficial worth? Veda-Vyasa! You are of unerring insight, of spotless fame, attached to truth and well practised in vows of *Sama* and *Dama* etc. Do you now therefore call to your mind through your power of yoga the glorious deeds of that Grand Purusha, Vasudeva, and discourse on them to set the people free from the bondage of the world. If you set your mind on composing works on other themes, you will have no harbour of rest and like a boat in a whirl-wind your uneasy mind will be wandering amidst superficial forms and names only. (10-14).

In Bharata and other works you have commended blameworthy actions arising out of desire and sought to promulgate their religiousness to people naturally inclined thereto and thereby you have done wrong, inasmuch as those people would take it as best of religion and would set at naught the dissuasion by others possessing Tattwa-jnana and would not even adhere to the injunctions of Vedas. I deprecate deeds arising out of desires and serving passionate ends, but with this must not be included the discourses

on the renown of Hari, for, persons of keen intellect are known to have realised the reality of His eternally transcending joy in all conditions of time and space. But such *anubhūti* (experience) is inconceivable to others. Therefore you should explain the glorious works of the Lord done in playful vein with their real significance to those who are confounded in the conception of body and soul and are engaged in actions under the influence of *sattwa* etc. Men unobservant of the conventional rules for their respective creed or class yet devoted to the lotus-like feet of Hari cannot be overtaken by any evil due to the non-observance of the conventional rules of their respective class even though they meet with death and become unsuccessful in achieving perfect realisation. Whoever has realised the due end merely observing the conventionality of his class without being devoted to the Lord Hari? Conscientious people would strive after achieving only that state which cannot be had by souls wandering through the highest and the lowest regions. Like weal and woe the worldly objects of the senses are brought to us in due course of time as results of our actions done in previous lives, and for that none need look for and toil. A worshipper of the Lord may for any cause be born to lower category of universe-form, but then he would not be led by despicable delight like other worldly men of activity. Such a devout worshipper of the Lord having once the taste of honey as that of His lotus-like feet can never forget the joy and ever clings to that sweet memory. The world is an emanation from Him and yet the Lord is separate from the world, for the creation, preservation and destruction of the world is done by the Lord. You know it all yourself, yet I have advised you a little thereon. You are an emanation of Hari who is free from the bondage of birth, and you have been born for the good of the world, and it behoves you, therefore, to discourse at length on the glories of Hari. Conscientious people would take glorification of

the sanctifying renown of the Lord to be the virtue of meditation, study of the Vedas, sacrifice, chanting of mantras, knowledge and charity. (15-22).

"Vyasa ! In my previous birth I was born of a maid-servant of some Brahmanas versed in the Vedas. In the rainy season the Brahmanas engaged themselves in a religious vow known as *Chaturmashya*, and they lived together. At that time my mother engaged me to the service of those Brahmanas. I left the wantonness and sportive pranks usual with children, and devoted my days ever in faithfully serving them. I became very sparing in speech, and though the Brahmanas were impartial in nature, they became very fond of me and showed me particular favours. One day with their permission I ate the remnants of food left in their platters. That day my sins were cleansed, and thereafter my soul gradually attained purity, and in me grew an attachment and earnestness for their pious practices. The Rishis daily sang the rapturous glories of Hari, and I heard them through their grace. Through hearing of the sanctifying praises of the Lord sung by the Brahmanas of strict vows, there arose in me an attachment to Narayana. Then flashed in my mind an all-round intelligence, so that by dint of it I came to know that I was in reality identical with *Brahman* and that being so, long under the influence of the illusory will of the Lord, I was thinking myself to be the body that merely garbed my soul which is an emanation of the Great Soul. During the rains and autumn, the high-minded Brahmanas regularly recited the pure praises of Hari in each of the three divisions of the course of the day. I listened to them daily whereby arose in me unflinching devotion, which destroyed the natural influences of Rajas and Tamas that were in me. I became cleansed of sin, devoted, and humble, and with constancy and reverence I served those Brahmanas. (23-29).

Thereafter when the rains ceased, the sages, ever

compassionate to the unfortunate and less-gifted ones, were desirous of leaving for distant places. At the time of their departure the kind-hearted Brahmanas secretly imparted to me the otherwise unknowable knowledge, which was revealed by the Lord Himself. Through that knowledge I was able to understand the *Maya* of the Lord Vasudeva, the creator of the Universe. The knowing of the Lord's *Maya* leads *jiva* to equality with the Lord. Dedication of all actions to the Lord who controls everything in the Universe is the most efficacious remedy to get rid of the three kinds of miseries viz. *Adhyatmika* (the physical afflictions), *Adhibhautika* (the miseries caused by the elements) and *Adhidaibika* (the pains caused by spirits) Disease caused by a particular thing cannot be cured by that very thing but it becomes effective only when mixed with proper medicine. Similarly, though actions are but causes of bondage and births, yet when the actions are solely for His service, they serve to set the soul free from the bondage of actions, and therefore from chains of births. (30-34).

Actions done for the satisfaction of the Lord produce devotion towards Him, and that devotion produces knowledge. The practices of the pious men are in accordance with this order, for performance of actions; in due course produces in all persons the desire of devotedly reciting His name and rapturously singing on the glories of the Lord Vasudeva. He is the real *jnanin* (possessor of real knowledge) who meditates saying, "I do bow down unto the Lord Pradyumna and the Lord Aniruddha and the Lord Vasudeva whose emanations are the former two Divinities," and who thus meditates upon the image formed in his mind as prescribed by his spiritual *mantra* (the technical name or formulæ of meditation). Vyasa ! I followed this advice of the Lord. Thereupon Hari endowed me with the grace of His Perfect Knowledge and imbued in me

earnest devotion to Himself. Do you too sing on the unending fame and eternal glory of the Lord of the Universe. Learned men ever crave for this. Besides this there is no other means to save the mortals from the unbearable miseries of manifold nature again and over again. (35-40)."

CHAPTER VI.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PREVIOUS LIFE OF NARADA.

Suta said, "Brahman ! Vyasa, son of Satyavati, having heard the brief account of the birth and deeds of Narada, asked the latter again,—“O Divine-sage ! When the Brahmanas, who imparted knowledge to you, departed for distant places, what did you do during your childhood ? What were the diverse ways of your passing the time ? and how did you give up the body-form of a despicable son of a maid-servant, when proper time came ? Time destroys everything. But how is it that you ' were able to retain the memories of your life assumed so long back as in a different cycle of time ? Why the length of time such as a *juga* could not destroy your reminiscences ?" (1-4).

Narada said, "Vyasa ! When the Brahmanas who imparted knowledge to me left for distant places, I now relate to you the things that I did in my childhood. I was the only child of my mother. Being but a woman, my mother was usually helpless and besides she was the more so as she was a maid-servant. I had none else to look after me, and as such she cared for me too much. My welfare was her only wish, but she herself being dependent on others, inspite of her will she could do

nothing for me. Like puppets in the hands of players, dependent persons are not supposed to have any freedom whatsoever. I was at that time a boy of five years only. I was quite ignorant of any direction, country and time, and I used to live in the same Brahman-family. Nevertheless I was ever anxiously awaiting the day when I will have been free from my mother's cares. Thus passed away some time. One night my poor mother went out of the house for milking a cow, and by chance trampled over a serpent on the way. Her feet merely touched the serpent, but as though so deputed for the purpose by the Lord of Death, that serpent immediately bit her. Thereupon my mother instantly died. I was not a bit sorry for the sad death of my mother, on the contrary I looked at the incident as a gracious dispensation of the merciful Lord. After the death of my mother I left the house of the Brahmana and proceeded on towards the North. (5-10).

I proceeded on and on and past many prosperous countries, cities, villages, pastures; many mines of gold and silver, agricultural tracts and villages on mountain-slopes. In some places I saw mountain ranges tinged by variegated colours of various mineral substances and looked wonderfully soothing to the eyes; the peaks of the hills were lined by trees the branches whereof broken by elephants were being gently moved by the flow of breeze. In other places lakes of transparent water was sparkling though covered by various sorts of aquatic weeds. In the waters of these lakes the gods were found to be sporting. On the banks of those lakes birds were chirping and the black-bees were flying hither and thither. I passed through the aforesaid beautiful scenery and found in front of me an extensive forest of dreadful sight. In the skirts of the forest grew thick clusters of reeds, knotty bamboos and other

trees and plants and made the forest impassable. In the forest were roaming about terrible snakes, tigers and other ferocious animals. At last with but best of my efforts I succeeded in entering that forest. Due to the long journey I had already undertaken, I was very much tired and my limbs were too fatigued, and I was much overwhelmed by thirst and hunger; so that first of all I took bath in a river that passed through the forest and drank the water of the river. Thus being refreshed, I sat under a big banian tree. I heard from the Rishis that the Great Soul resides in the heart. In that loneliness of the forest—in its serene silence—I began to meditate upon the Lord with the help of my concentration. (11-16).

As I meditated upon the lotus-like feet of the Lord with deep concentration and devotion, my eyes became full of tears due to the extreme anxiety for realising Him. In the course of my meditation—too merciful towards the devotees as Narayana is—He slowly dawned upon my soul. Thereupon due to the indescribable joy that I felt at that time the hairs on my body stood on their ends. Due to the unspeakable happiness and joy I was then merged in, I had no feeling of my separate existence from that Great Soul I was meditating upon. But that indescribable and ever craved for image of the Lord, capable of removing all miseries, did not last for long. With the fading away of the joyful image, my soul became again perturbed. I rose from my seat in all anxiety and again tried my best to concentrate my mind to have another glimpse of that image. Alas! Even with best of my attempts, like a blind man straining his eyes I did not see the image any more. I was very much pained by the agony of the baffled enjoyment. Thereupon the Lord who is beyond description and comprehension, with a view to consoling me, spoke these words in grave and steady voice “O ye Innocent one! I

will not be visible to you any more in this your life. The sages who have not attained perfection by reason of the taints in them of the influences of desire etc cannot behold me. Merely to augment your eagerness for me I have revealed my form to you only once. The pious ones, fast attached to me as they are, can in due course renounce all desires. Do you remain serving the saints for a long time and thereby fix up your devotion unflinchingly on me, and only then you will be able to leave this world to live ever with me. Once your soul is solely dedicated to me, it can never thereafter be with-drawn or dissociated. He who fixes his mind upon me can retain his mind in me even after the day of doom." (17-25).

"Like ether existing invisibly everywhere, the Great Being Hari vanished after speaking those words. I felt greatly favoured and gratefully bowed down my head. Thenceforward I became free from pride and scepticism and began to freely sing on His glories and recite His sanctifying name. Thus I wandered over the countries cheerfully awaiting the day referred to by the Lord. When I was thus passing my days singing on the glories of the Lord in my purified mind and deeply concentrated attention, even as a sudden flash of lightning Death presented itself to me. As promised by the Lord before I assumed a pure and divine form, and my former crude form fell off like the cessation of an action. Thereafter at the time of the dissolution of the world Hari destroyed the whole Creation and lay down on the surface of the ocean. At that time I stole into His body with His breath. Thus elapsed one thousand *juga*, at the end of which the Lord desirous of Creation awakened from His self-communion. Thereupon with Marichi, Angira and other sages I was born of His senses. (26-31).

"Thenceforward I have been keeping my vow of Brahmacharyya strictly, and am wandering through the

grace of the Lord Vishnu everywhere in the three worlds. My access is not barred anywhere. The *Vina* (stringed musical instrument) in my hand is a celestial one and the tune of this is in symphony with the word emblem (*Om*) of *Brahman*. I rapturously play on the *Vina* and wander about everywhere. As I sing the glories of the Lord, Hari presents Himself in my heart like a guest courteously welcomed. Vyasa! For persons of weak mind overwhelmed with desire and lust of passion recitation of the glorious deeds of the Lord is the only means to tide them over the ocean of wordly cares. Persons attached to lust and greed cannot have peace through the practices of *Yoga*, but through Hari's service they can derive satisfaction of the soul. O ye sinless one! In reply to your query I have fully narrated to you about my birth, deeds and ultimate attainment of emancipation,—for your satisfaction."

Suta spoke,—“With those words the Divine sage Nārada bade adieu to Vyasadeva, the son of Satyabati, and led by his pleasure went on his way playing upon the lyre. Gloyr unto the Divine sage! Pleasantly playing upon his lyre and rapturously singing on the Glories of the Lord the Divine Sage soothes the three world ailing woefully ” (32-39)

CHAPTER VII.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PUNISHMENT INFLICTED

ON ASWATHWAMA.

Saunaka asked,—“O Suta ! After Nārada had left, what did Vyasa do in fulfilling the advice of that Divine sage ?”

Suta replied,—“O Brahmanas! There was a sacred Asrama *Samyaprasa* by name on the western bank of the holy river Saraswati. The Asrama was very thickly

covered by a cluster of plum-trees. One day mighty Vyāsa sat there and after performing ablutions, he concentrated his whole attention on the meditation upon the Almighty. Thus, by dint of devotion, as he concentrated his unsullied mind to a focus, first of all he beheld Him and with Him he beheld also *Māyā*—the personified illusory will of the Lord. Under the illusion of *Māyā*, though fundamentally untouched by the three qualities (*Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*), the Jiva-soul thinks itself to be possessed of them. Thus viewing itself to be possessed of the three qualities the Jiva-soul thinks itself to be the worker of actions really performed by those qualities. This illusory process also was then beheld by the Maharshi. He further perceived that devotion to Sri Krishna destroys all evils. Thereupon the mighty sage compiled this Bhagbata Samhita for the supreme good of all men blinded by ignorance. Through hearing of this holy Purana, there grows in the minds of men devotion to Sri Krishna the One Absolute Being, and that spirit of devotion destroys avarice and attachment O Brahmanas! Maharshi Vyasa after having composed this Purana of precious merit, revised it and first of all he taught it to his illustrious son Suka devoid of worldly desires." (1-8).

Saunaka asked,—“O Suta! Suk-deva was given to the practices of abstinence, and as such he renounced everything and remained ever rapturously engaged in the meditation upon God. Even then, why did he take the trouble of reading the vast Bhagbata Purana?”

Suta replied,—“O foremost of the Brahmanas! Being rapturously merged in the joy arising out of the meditation upon God in the soul unfettered by ties, though abstained from any worldly desire, sages practise devotion to Hari being merely drawn by His goodness. Such is the glory of His grace that all liberated and unliberated show earnestness in offering devotion to Him. Ever fond of the *Vaishnavas* (the worshippers of Vishnu) Suk-deva studied

the vast spiritual treatise being drawn by that glory of the merciful Lord. In the course of the narration of the glorious deeds of Krishna, I shall now speak unto thee about the birth, the deeds and the death of Rajarshi (Royal-sage) Parikshit, along with the eternal sojourn of the Pandavas (the sons of Pandu). (9-12).

All warriors of the both sides—of the Kauravas and the Pandavas having died in the field of battle and thereby attaining heaven, Bhimsen (the second son of Pandu) smashed the thigh of Durjodhana by a blow of his deadly mace. Thereupon with a view to please the King Durjodhana, Aswathwama broke into the camp of the Pandavas at night and killed the five sleeping sons of Draupadi. The son of Drona (Aswathwama) presented to Durjodhana the five heads, thinking that it will be appreciated by the latter, his master. But actually Durjodhana did not at all feel any satisfaction. Terribly moved by the severe grief at the sad end of all her boys, Draupadi set up a frenzied wailing. Then Arjuna addressed her these words of consolation: "O noble lady! I will soon bring to you the head of that enemy Aswathwama, the villain among Brahmanas, by means of a shaft shot from my *Gandiva* (the celestial bow that Arjuna possessed). You shall then stand on his cursed head and take bath in his blood to be avenged of the dastardly crime perpetrated by him." Having spoken those words of consolation to his wife, Dhananjaya (Arjuna) put on his impenetrable armour, held the terrible bow (*Gandiva*) in his hand and mounting a chariot chased Aswathwama, the son of his preceptor. Aswathwama, the slayer of innocent infant boys saw from a distance that Arjuna was approaching towards him. Thereupon he literally shook with fear, and tried his utmost to fly for life, just as Brahma is said to have fled out of terror for Mahadeva (Siva). But he could not find any one to save him, and his horses were too fatigued.

Thus finding himself entirely helpless and being unable to find out any other way of saving his life, Aswathwama thought of *Brahmastra* (a weapon that goes by that name) to be the only resort (13-19).

The son of Drona did not know the process of revoking the *Brahmastra*. Yet, in order to save himself from that imminent peril he chanted the invocation of the spirit of that weapon and hurled it. Instantly as it was hurled, terrible flashes of light burst forth from the weapon towards all directions. Thereupon on seeing the peril that threatened his life, Arjuna very anxiously addressed Krishna :—

“O Krishna ! O Krishna !! O thou Lord of mighty arms !!! You are the only protector of the devout, and you alone save the mortals scorched by the fiery miseries of this world. You are the Primordial Being and you are the only Controller of the whole Creation. You are the Lord of Prakriti (Nature personified) and you are the prime source of creation though you rest on spiritual aloofness. You lord over Maya through your animated will and manifest yourself as the best of all joys. You are not influenced by Maya, yet you grant blessings to the worldly men under the illusion of Maya. The purpose of this your incarnation as Krishna is not only to lighten the burden of the Earth but also your kindness to the pious ones is evident, for your kinsmen and worshippers would ever meditate upon this image of your incarnation. O God of gods, where is it that this terrible flash of burning flames coming from and running apace, and how it has been caused ?” (20-26)

Sri Krishna replied, “My friend ! It is *Brahmastra*. Aswathwama the son of Drona, being afraid of his life, has hurled it. He himself, however, does not know the process of revoking a *Brāhmastra*. A *Brahmastra* can be awarded only by a *Brahmastra* only.

You are well versed in the use of weapons. You do, therefore, ward off the enemy's weapon by a Brahmastra."

Suta said, "Partha, (a name of Arjuna—the son of Pritha, Kunti) the destroyer of enemies, on hearing the words of Krishna performed *achmana* (a process of taking three dips of water uttering the name of Vishnu) and after going round the person of Sri Krishna as a mark of respect, aimed a Brahmastra with a view to quell the same weapon hurled by Aswathwama. In a short time the two weapons soared high in the sky and met each other. Then the dazzling flashes of both the dreadful weapons illumined the whole atmosphere. It seemed that at the end of the creation the effulgent flashes and flames of Sun and Fire combined in the sky. Feeling themselves scorched by the burning flashes of the weapons all beings of the three worlds became very much anxious and deemed it to be due to the fire of the day of doom. Thereupon in obedience to the desire of the Lord Vasudeva, Sabyasachi (a name of Arjuna) being afraid of the imminent destruction of the worlds withdrew both the weapons. And then Arjuna caught hold of the villainous son of Gautami (Aswathwama) and bound him fast with a rope as a sacrificial animal, and dragged him thus bound up towards the camp. On seeing this, with eyes glowing with rage that lotus-eyed Vasudeva addressed Arjuna these words ;—

"O Partha ! The life of this villain among Brahmanas should not be spared. This cruel and mischievous rascal has butchered the innocent boys calmly sleeping in the camp at night. It is ordained that righteous men would never kill even an enemy who is drunken, mad, unawares, surrendered or without a chariot. Then again, babies, women, inert and frightened ones are never to be killed. It is never sinful to kill a shameless and ruthless person who saves his own life by killing others; for capital punishment is the fit atonement for him, and it is like a

penance to him. Without such a fit punishment damnation is surely his end and he goes to hell. Besides you have promised to Panchali the head of this your enemy who has slain her boys. This your promise I have heard with my own ears. Therefore you do kill this enemy. O hero! The villain has not only caused irreparable loss to us, he has greatly wronged his own master Durdjodhana too." (27-39).

Even though Krishna instigated Arjuna to kill Aswathwama the slayer of his sons as aforesaid,—Arjuna did not kill him. He dragged him into his own camp and placed him before Panchali who was wailing for the loss of her sons. Draupadi saw him thus bound up by ropes like an animal. At that time Aswathwama wore a very sorry figure for the perpetration of the ignominious and inhuman crime. Draupadi felt the disdain and insulting behaviours accorded to the victim, and being unable to bear seeing him thus bound up like a beast, she fell down on his feet and thus requested Arjuna :—

"O my lord! Release this Brahmana. He is the son of our preceptor and as such he too is a preceptor to us. It was the revered Drona from whom you learnt the art of archery in full with the relative formulae of hurling and revoking of the various arms. That mighty Drona lives now in the person of his son. Illustrious Kripa, the half of Drona's soul is yet alive. She did not sacrifice herself on her husband's funeral pyre by reason of her having a heroic son (40-45)-

Noble Sir, it does not behove you to cause any harm to the preceptor's family, and on the other hand you should offer respect and worship to them. My Lord! Let not the daughter of Gāutama shed tears alike me lamenting the loss of her son. If any Kshatriya being unable to control his anger insults Brahmanas, then he suffers eternal grief with his whole family." (46-48).

Suta said, "O ye Munis! The king Yudhisthira, the son of Dharma, Nakul, Sahadeva, the mighty Vasudeva, Sātyaki, Arjuna and all others present there unanimously praised in high terms the queen Draupadi's above words consonant with religion, in conformity with reason and impartially true. But Bhimsena was not appeased. Burning with rage as he was then, he burst forth, "To kill him will be meeting out fit atonement for his despicable crime. The loathsome villain has slain the boys sleeping soundly without any fault on their part, but thereby the evil-worker could neither achieve any personal gain nor could he please his master. On hearing these words of Bhīma and Draupadi,—Vasudeva assumed his Godly form with four hands and standing between them, he smilingly addressed Arjuna, "My dear friend! A Brahmana is not to be slain, but one, whoever he may be, aiming at killing others shall himself be killed. In religious works I have ordained the both. You should observe both the above injunctions, and thereby you will have been redeeming the promise you swore for consoling your wife, and yet it will satisfy Bhimsen, myself and Panchali." (49-54).

Suta said, "Arjuna thought that killing and saving the same life was an impossibility. With a view, however, to respect the wishes of Krishna, Arjuna cut away the gem that grew on Aswathwama's head. The son of Drōṇa was already sorry for the shameful act of killing the sleeping innocent boys, and he became stripped of all glory and grace on account of the loss of the gem that grew on his head. Dhananjaya (Arjuna) thus humiliated Aswathwama, released him from the ties and drove him out of the camp. Through this action all the words of Krishna were carried out, inasmuch as the shaving the head, robbing of riches and driving out of the country are the sastric punishments for the Brahmana criminals. Besides the above, there is no other physical punishment

prescribed for them. Thereafter the Pandavas with Draupadi, all overwhelmed with extreme grief for the loss, performed the last rites to the dead sons. (55-58).

CHAPTER VIII.

INVOCATION OF SRI KRISHNA BY KUNTI.

Suta said,—“Thereafter the Pandavas with a view to offer waters to their departed kinsmen proceeded to the Ganges with Sri Krishna and according to the sastras they were headed by the train of women.” They bathed in the holy waters of the Ganges which flowed from the lotus-like feet of Hari. With tears flowing from their eyes they performed the rite of offering water to the departed ones. At that time the kind-hearted Yudhisthira sat there with his brothers with a heavy heart. Dhritarashtra, Vidura, Gandhari, Kunti and Draupadi were sorely mourning for the loss of their sons. With a view to console them Sri Krishna said, “All of you give up mourning, vain as it is, for at the day of doom every creature dies, and this end is ever irresistible and inevitable.”

“O Munis! Duryodhana and the other wily ones had shortened the span of their lives by cheating and despoiling the territories of virtuous Yudhisthira and by dragging Draupadi by her locks. They met with death by the will of Sri Krishna and the Kingdom of Yudhisthira was won back. To the evil-workers death was the fit atonement. Once again Yudhisthira was formally installed on the throne, and he was initiated in three successive horse-sacrifices and in every case the sacrifice was performed with entire success. Thereupon the holy fame and renown of the Pandava king spread in all directions like that of Indra, the king of heaven. (1-6).

Thereafter wishing good wishes to the Pandavas, Sri Krishna desired to return to Dwaraka with Satyaki and Uddhava. On hearing that Sri Krishna will be going away, Dwaipayana and the other munis began to worship him. Sri Krishna also duly honoured the munis according to the sastric practices. Sri Krishna was ready to enter the chariot. Just at that time he saw that Uttara, the wife of Abhimanyu was running towards him in a frantic mood, and she was heard crying in dismay, "O the best of Yogins and the Lord of the universe! Save me, save me. You are the only One in the universe who has none to fear from. Man is mortal. O thou Great God of self-communion! I find a dreadful arrow of burning flames approaching me. O Lord! I do not fear at all for my own life, but I fear lest it kills the child in my womb." (7-10).

Suta said, "O ye Brahmanas! On hearing the words of Uttara, the Lord, fond of His devotees, expressed that Aswathwama has hurled Brahmastra again with a view to extirpate the Pandavas from this world. In the meantime finding the dreadful arrow nearing them and threatening their lives, the Pandavas took up their respective arms to ward off the arrow. But a Brahmastra could not be neutralised by any other weapon. So that with a view to protect the Pandavas from the imminent peril, the Lord neutralised the arrow by His Sudarsana (a weapon of revolving disc). The Lord dwells within all, through His power of yoga. In His subtle form He entered in the womb of Uttara, the daughter of the king of Virata, and sheltered the child in the womb by His impenetrable cover of illusory will or Maya. O thou glorious scion of the Bhṛigu's race! Even though the Brahmastra of Drauni was irresistible and unfailing, yet it was neutralised by the Lord's fiery weapon. You must not slight the incident merely thinking on the improbability thereof. To the Lord there is no impossibility,

everything is possible in Him. By His mere fanciful will the Lord creates, preserves and destroys the whole of the transcendental universe. There's nothing that cannot be through His will. (11-16).

Hrishikesh, the son of Devaki, after protecting the Pandavas in the manner aforesaid, was ready to leave for Dwaraka. At that time Kunti with her sons and daughters-in-law (sons' wives) began to sing on the Lord's glories. "Krishna ! Thou art never younger in age, for thou art the Primordial Being, and we do therefore bow unto thee. You are the Lord yourself. Nature itself being thy manifestation, you are not merged in her. She is controlled by thee. You are transcending all creation within and without, yet thou art invisible because of thy cover of Maya. O Lord, knowledge of the senses are but vain to thee. Thou art without any ebbing. Just as a person with defective eye-sight cannot recognise an actor playing a part, so Jiva with the pride of the crude body cannot realise your truly Divine nature. Such is the greatness of your glory that even Munis of stainless soul and conscience free from dross such as anger hatred etc cannot have your vision, and as such how can we women behold thee ? Again, how can we have proper devotion to thee without knowing thee ? Therefore, O Krishna, O Vasudeva, O the son of Devaki, O the son of Nanda—the king of the Gopas, O Govinda, O thou possessor of lotus-like navel, O thou wearing a garland of lotus, O thou of lotus-like eyes,—neither by devotion or knowledge nor by any other means you are knowable. We do not expect to know you in that way. We are charmed by your goodness and we do bow down to your lotus-like feet. (17-22)

Hrishikesh ! You released Devaki suffering from immense grief on account of her long imprisonment by the cruel king Kansa. You have also saved me and my five sons many a time from various perilous troubles.

But, I have marked your special favour on me than that you showed to your mother. She had many helpers, and yet she had to suffer long imprisonment. She had been suffering from successive griefs on account of the successive loss of her sons, and even then you released her long after. But Krishna, I have no other resort. I fell into troubles time and again, and every time you rescued me and my sons at the earliest time, and thereby shown your particular favours. O Krishna, only through your grace my sons were able to save themselves from poison, from the planned burning of the house of lac and from Rakshasas such as Hirimba etc. You have also saved my sons at the time of the gambling of dice, at the time of their exile into forest and from the threatening dangers of their lives from the weapons of the mighty enemies. And now you have saved us from the Brahmastra of Aswathwama. O thou Lord of the Universe ! I pray that dangers may befall us always, so that we may ever expect your graces. Jiva having your vision does not suffer from the bondages of births and deaths. O God ! I have known that there is no good in prosperity, for due to the concomitant pride of noble births, wealth, erudition and luxuries, people become unable even to utter thy holy names. Hari ! Thou art the wealth of the poor. Thou art visible to him who is bereft of all worldly possession. I do, therefore, bow unto thee. Thou art ever bountifully showering your favours on your devotees, and they are everything to you. You are not particular about religious rites, wealth or desires. Thou art self-content. Being without the influences of attachment and other senses, you are enjoying ceaseless peace. Only thou art capable of granting liberation to the soul, and therefore do I bow unto thee. (23-27)

I do not think of you to be merely the son of Devaki. On the contrary I do think of you to be the Primordial Being, Controller of the Creation, the ultimate end of all and the Destroyer of everything. Thou art existing

everywhere at the same time. People do quarrel amongst themselves on your identity, whereas there is no real cause for this. O God, none knows the real purpose of thy manifestations. There is no one dear to you, nor any one otherwise, so that it cannot be believed that you do show favour or ill-will to any one. O thou soul of the universe, you are without birth, and yet you assumed the form of a Boar, as Rama in human form, as Nara-Narayana etc in the order of Rishis, and as a Fish in the order of aquatic animals. You have no imperative work to perform, but I find you creating the universe etc. O Lord! What these mean? It is very wonderful. Krishna! You are terror to terror itself. When, however, you broke a pot of curd in childish inadvertency, and as your mother Jasoda approached you to tie your hands with a rope, you showed much fear and with extreme perturbation of mind you cast your look to the ground. At that time tears rolled down your cheeks and washed away the paint of collyrium of your eyes. O Madhava! I feel perplexed when I think of your strange conduct. I cannot make out anything clearly. The world is charmed by your Maya or illusion. Therefore many people, being unable to understand anything clearly misinterpret in different ways the purpose of your incarnation. Some people say that just as sandal-wood grows in the Malaya mountain to make the mountain the more famous, so also you assumed your birth in the noble Jadu family with a view to spread the wonderful virtue and unsullied fame of Judhithira throughout the world. (28-32).

Some people, however, say that in their previous birth as Sutapas and Prishni,—Basudeb and Devaki prayed for having you as their son. To fulfil that prayer and also to destroy the demons for the supreme good of the world, you have been born as Krishna of Devaki. It is heard from others, however, that on seeing the Earth hard

pressed under heavy burden like a heavily loaded vessel in the ocean,—Brahma prayed for your incarnation. Again, many others say that Jivas perform actions under illusion of ignorance for the satisfaction of their various worldly desires, and eventually suffer manifold concomitant miseries. You have assumed manifestations to relieve them from those miseries. Those who hear your glorious deeds, sing on and repeatedly recite those glories, meditate upon them and become pleased on hearing them recited by others,—do soon attain your lotus-like feet and achieve liberation from the bondage of births and deaths. O Lord ! You should not leave us now thinking that you have fulfilled the prayer of your relations. We are not only related to you, but we are also dependent on you. Specially at this time when having caused displeasure to the various kings, we have no other shelter than that of your lotus-like feet, and no other object to expect consolation from. (33-37)

The Jadavas and my sons have been well renowned in the three regions of the world as heroes. They are still alive. But without you they will be bereft of their courage, strength and prosperity. Then we shall be slighted as too insignificant and weak. O Gadadhara (Weilder of a Mace), this our extensive territory is looking abounding in soothing scenes and grandeur of prosperity for bearing your footprints having divine marks of Dhruva, Bajra and Ankusha etc. (Astrological signs of a Divinity). The good grace and grandeur will vanish as soon as you depart. Merely for your holy presence the cities are beaming with prosperity, the trees and plants are bearing ripe fruits and beautiful flowers in due season, and forests, mountains and lakes are looking so full of attractive sceneries. And even yet I cannot request you to remain here for ever, for, the Jadavas are our relations and I cannot bear to think of their pining away for your absence and separation. But on your departure our woes will know no bounds. Therefore, Krishna,

you do please solve my dilemma. Be you good enough to remove from my mind the sense of attachment I bear towards the Jadavas and the Pandavas. Then only will my soul be unflinchingly pitched on your meditation, and the undivided concentration of my mind will remain focussed on you just as the Ganges flows on ever towards the ocean. O Krishna ! O the Charioteer of Arjuna ! O the king of the Brishnis ! O the Master of 'Yogas ! O Lord of the Universe ! O God ! I do again bow unto thee. O foremost of the Jadavas, you destroy the Kshatriyas who cause injury to the world, but your might does not diminish thereby. You possess the wealth of the desire-yielding cow. You do assume incarnation to remove the miseries of the gods and the twice-born ones. (38-43)".

Suta said,—Being thus praised by Kunti in voice sweet and melodious and with words consonant in all the aspects of His glories,—Krishna smiled a little. That gentle smile was nothing else than Maya, and as such it fascinated all like a spell from a magician's wand. Thereafter Sri Krishna entered the Hastinapura assenting to the earnest prayer of Kunti. There he asked for leave of Kunti, Uttara and other women and became ready to leave for Dwaraka. But, out of deep and sincere affection Judhisthira could not readily bid adieu to Madhava and held him back saying,—“Do thou live here for sometime more.” O Munis ! Bhishma was a great devotee of Sri Krishna. For this reason Sri Krishna, God incarnate, accompanied by Judhisthira desired to see Bhishma. Judhisthira, the king, was too overwhelmed with grief on account of the loss of so many of his kinsmen. Sri Krishna desired that he should receive advice and consolation from Bhishma. For this reason, even Veda Vyasa and other sages were not able to console the king Judhisthira even though they attempted so to do by citing various incidents and eventful stories from the Puranas. Even the words of Sri Krishna Himself did not, for the same reason, bear the desired fruit. The

king Judhisthira, due to the illusory mist of ignorance, became too overwhelmed with grief for the loss of the most of his kinsmen. With voice choked with emotion he burst out saying, "Alas!, What a fool I am! What an evil-mind do I bear in my heart! I did not think before that I would be killing the eighteen Akshaulinis (one chariot, one elephant, five foot soldiers, and three horses form one Patti; three pattis make one Sena-mukha; three sena-mukhas are called a Gulma; three gulmas, a Gana; three ganas, a Vahini; three vahinis together are called a Pritana; three pritanas form a Chamu; three chamus, one Anikini; and an Anikini taken ten times forms, as it is styled by those who know, an Akshauhini), of warriors of both sides for this my body which would form food for the jackals and dogs etc, Shame be to me. I have caused to be slain young boys, Brahmanas, kinsmen, friends, uncles, brothers and the preceptors. My horrible and despicable sin on account of this will not be fully expiated even after suffering ten thousand years of hell-life. The sastras prescribe that a king who protects his subject does not incur any sin for killing his enemies in a battle rightly fought. But this scriptural prescription does not afford me any consolation. It is further prescribed in the sastras that a king may be slain by others when he oppresses his subject. But Durjodhana was known to have treated his subjects as though they were his children, and there was no room to blame him in this respect. I have killed him through greed of kingdom. I have killed sons, husbands and friends of others, and as such I have indirectly injured women too. By no religious rites or pious practices generally observed by house-holders can I expect to wipe away my sins in this respect. Just as mire cannot be wiped off by mire and as no quantity of wine would purify an article made already impure by wine,—similarly no scriptural rites would absolve the sin contracted by killing of others lives." (44-52).

CHAPTER IX.

REGAINING OF KINGDOM BY JUDHISTHIRA.

Suta said,—The king Judhisthira became very much apprehensive of having incurred great sin on account of killing so many lives. Being therefore disconsolate and fearful, he went to Bhishma, who was lying in the battle-field of Kurukshetra,—to hear from him various religious discourses. He was accompanied by his brethren, Brahmanas such as Vyasa and Dhaumya etc. He was carried on a golden chariot driven by well-bred horses. Sri Krishna, with his friend Arjuna followed Judhisthira in another chariot. Amidst his followers the king Judhisthira shone like Kuvra (the God of Riches) in the midst of Guhyakas (an order of demi-gods) Thus the Pandavas with Sri Krishna and other followers arrived at Kurukshetra. There they saw Bhishma lying on the earth as a god fallen from heaven, and all of them bowed down before him.

To see the son of Ganga (Ganges personified) there assembled at that time Brahmarshis (sages of the rank of Brahma), Devarshis (sages such as have found a place among the gods) and Rajarshis (sages who were kings). O Brahmanas, thereafter gradually arrived there with their respective disciples sages such as Parvata, Dhaumya, Narada, Bharadwaja, Parasurama, Vasistha, Indrapramada, Trita, Ghritsamada, Asita, Kakshivan, Gautama, Atri. Kausika, Sudarsana, Sukdeva, Kasyapa and Brihaspati etc. The pious Bhishma was well versed in the knowledge of duties and manners with regard to time and place. On seeing the great assemblage of so many Maharshis before him, Bhishma paid them due honours. He knew of Krishna's glories very well. The Lord had been ever

existing in divine and subtle form in his heart. Yet through His own illusion He was now present before Bhishma in human form. Seeing Krishna thus before him, Bhishma duly worshipped Him also. (5-10).

The sons of Pandu were then deeply moved with affection and compassion, and were seated with their heads hung down. Then Bhishma on seeing them thus seated close by began to shed tears. The flow of tears obstructed his vision. Then he began to say in a sad tone,—

“O the Pity ! O the evil enterprise ! O the sons of Pandu, you are devoted to the Brahmanas, Righteousness and Narayana. Why are you yet thinking of the world to be woeful and feeling unwilling to carry on your lives ? At the time of Maharaja Pandu's death, you all were but infants. For this reason your mother Kunti had to suffer various troubles for the sake of all of you. Alas ! You are entirely innocent and righteous, even yet you have been so seriously distressed at different times. You are not to be blamed for this. It is eventful time that drew you into distress. In the cycle of time is rolling this universe. Just as the clouds depend on the wind, so also creatures are dependent on the tide of time. How irresistibly powerful time is ! It can work miracle. Even those had to suffer from various troubles time and again who had the son of Dharma as their king, and Bhimsen of unlimited prowess, Arjuna the best of warriors, Gandiva the best of bows and the Lord Sri-Krishna as their protectors. (11-15).

O Yudhisthira, none can understand the will of Sri-Krishna, the son of Vasudeva. Even erudite Pandits become baffled in their attempts at knowing the will of the Lord. O the best of the Bharata race, knowing every thing to be dependent on the tide of time, do you too act up to the time. O king, protect your subjects dutifully. This Vasudeva is the first of all beings, but through His own Maya he has assumed Himself as the son of the Jadu family and the people in their ignorance believing Him to be as

such. He is the all powerful eternal Time. He is the divine Lord and you should ever follow Him. His might is rather unknowable. Only Siva, Narada and Kapila know of Him. O my boy, He is the Lord Himself whom you take to be the son of your maternal uncle, a friend and well-wisher, and who in his turn has served you as a minister and charioteer. You will do well to ever act as per his direction. You should not think Him to be otherwise because of His serving you as a charioteer. He is omnipotent and He views all things with an equal eye. He has no desire, no hatred, no pride nor partiality. It is therefore that He does not view the merit of an action from its propriety or impropriety. To God all is equal. But with regard to devotees He is partial to a degree. Knowing that my end is imminent, He, the Lord, has come up to me. (16-22.)

The sages recite His name and concentrate their mind on Him through yoga, so that when they die in that state they go beyond the influence of actions, and as such escape rebirth. My earnest prayer, therefore, is that the Lord may be pleased to remain before me till the end of my life. That what other people will meditate upon their soul, I should like to see with my own eyes that possessor of lotus-like eyes matching the sublimely graceful face beaming with fascinating smiles."

Suta said,—O Brahmanas ! Judhisthira was exceedingly pleased to hear the aforesaid words of his grand-father Bhishma, and he enquired of the latter advice on various religious problems. O Munis ! Thereupon the son of Ganga according to the query of the king Judhisthira, discoursed on *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama*, *Moksha* and various other religion and irreligion, the merits of Charity, the Emancipatory rites, Duties of kings, Duties of females, and the observances of set rites for the service of God in astrological order of the 12th day of the moon etc. Bhishma spoke on the above subjects with anecdotes and examples.

He also spoke on the laws ascribing different modes of religious practices according to the people. Bhishma was a great Yogin, and death was dependent on his will. He had the earnest desire to die during the *Uttarayana* (the astrological division of the year, when the sun turns to its Northward march), and for this reason he was lying on the bed of arrows even for such a length of time after the last day of his fight. As he went on discoursing on the religious topics with Judhisthira, the *Uttarayana* season arrived. At that time he stopped speaking, entirely withdrew his senses from the worldly matters and concentrated his whole attention in meditating upon that Primordial Being Sri Krishna having four hands and wearing yellow coloured clothes; but his eyes did not close. Due to the purity of that concentration of mind and on account of the meditation upon the Absolute Truth,—all evils ceased. Through the kindly look of Sri Krishna, the excruciating pains of the arrows also became soothed. With the cessation of the pains, the influence of the senses was also removed. Thereupon Bhishma began to praise the Lord, as a preliminary to shuffling off his mortal coil. (23-31).

Bhishma said,—I do dedicate unto the feet of the Lord—ever merciful towards His devotees—my mind completely withdrawn from the worldly things and this act of dedication produce in me an unflinching attachment towards the Prime Being, Sri-Krishna. The Lord is of transcendent glory and is fully merged in the enjoyment in Himself, only at times in revelling vein He doth join with Prakriti wherefrom issues forth the flow of creation. He is a friend of Arjuna, the possessor of the celestial bow Gandiva. His complexion green as the *Tamala* (a creeper of that name) is fascinating to the three worlds. The lustrous yellow hue of His fine raiment with the rays of the sun on it is unspeakably graceful. His lotus-like-face decked with

pendent locks of curly hair wears a very pleasant look. I have no other desire save and except that my mind be for ever attached to the Lord. Alas! In the battle-field the thick cluster of curly hairs of Sri Krishna was made brown by the dust kicked up by the hoofs of horses. The beads of sweat on his forehead due to the labour made His lotus face look fascinating. My sharp shafts piercing through His shining armour produced a sparkling spectacle. Now I do earnestly pray that my mind be firmly attached to him. How singularly attached is He towards His friend Arjuna. In the battle-field on being so asked by Arjuna, He, Sri Krishna, posted the chariot between the two hostile parties and reft the might of the heroes of the opposite side by merely glancing on them. Let my mind be clung to His feet. When on seeing us at the front of the opposite party Arjuna was overwhelmed with grief of being the cause of destruction of us, his kinsmen, He revealed to him the nature of the Soul and thus dispelled the delusion of Arjuna's mind. Therefore, let my mind cling to Him. (32-36).

At the beginning of the battle Sri Krishna swore unto the Pandavas that while He will be helping them in all possible ways, He Himself would not hold any weapon. But I had an earnest desire of getting Him bear arms in the battlefield. Being immensely merciful to His devotees He could not but fulfil my desire, and even though at the sacrifice of his own promise, He jumped out of the chariot with a wheel in His hand and rushed on towards me. At that time the outer wearing apparel dropped off His person and trailed on the ground. With hundreds of keen-edged arrows I pierced his *tamala* complexioned body. He was literally bathed with incessant flow of blood. Arjuna again and again dissuaded Him, but He was not dissuaded. Like a lion unto an elephant, He proceeded on towards me. Now I

do earnestly pray that the Lord of the Universe be my last resort to-day. The Lord who is not attainable even through meditation, engaged Himself in the lowly service as a charioteer merely for the great affection He had for His friend Arjuna. Thereby He wore a very pleasing spectacle. At this fag end of the span of my life, let my attention be pitched unto Him. Such is the unspeakable glory of the Lord that by merely looking on Him the warriors that fell in the battle attained heaven. This son of Nanda enhanced the goodwill of the Gopa-women through His graceful gait, fascinating smile and askanee look of amour. With that pride of winning Him they followed His glorious deeds and at the end attained Him. What to speak then of the heroes of the kshatriya race leaving their bodies in the battle-field ! Let my mind remain ever clinging to this merciful Lord. In the Rajsuya sacrifice of Yudhisthira, the celebrated kings of various territories and the pious Munis present there were immensely struck with wonder thinking of his great glories. What a good luck mine is ! The glorious Lord of the Universe is before my eyes in human form at this end of my days. I have attained self-complacency. The Lord Vasudeva is without a birth and He is the Soul of the universe. He creates the creatures and subtly remains hidden in their hearts. Just as the same sun appears different due to the different lens looked through, so also He appears to be different according to the different aspects of mind that different men have. Taking resort to at the Lord's feet I have no more any attachment to the world and my distinction of vision has been removed (37-42)

Suta said,—O Brahmanas ! As aforesaid Bhishma concentrated his mind, speech and sight towards Sri Krishna, of whom he was an emanation, and thereby merged in Him. In the last his breath did not escape outward, but it stopped within him. On seeing the great grand-father merging in the indescribable *Brahman*, all present there

became silent and moody just as birds at the end of days. Celestial music commenced, and the pious minded persons amongst the kings present began to praise on him, and flowers were strewn over there from heaven. Judhisthira performed the obsequial rites for Bhishma and expressed his sorrows. At that time the Munis began to recite the different names of Sri Krishna and sang the glories of the Lord. With thought of God in mind every one departed. Thereupon the king Judhisthira also returned to Hastinapur with Sri Krishna and consoled Dhritarashtra and Gandhari. Dhritarashtra gave his consent to Judhisthira's ascending the throne. Krishna also consenting to the same, Judhisthira ascending the throne and ruled religiously the kingdom once ruled by his forefathers. (43-49).

CHAPTER X.

SRI KRISHNA'S RETURN TO DWARAKA.

Saunaka asked.—“Suta, those persons fought for wealth and prosperity, and Judhisthira, the best of pious ones, killed those enemies, but became overwhelmed with grief and felt loathed the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. At that time what he intended to do with his brothers?”

On being thus asked, Suta said, “O Ye foremost of the Munis, Sri Krishna, the Lord of the three regions of the world and the protector of piety—protected Parikshit and saved the descendant of the Kuru family from the burning flames of wrath, and was verily pleased to install Judhisthira to the throne. The whole universe is within the control of God, and none can do anything independently. The king Judhisthira heard this truth from Bhishma and Sri Krishna, and thereby the mist of ignorance of his mind in this respect was removed. He did not any more think himself to be the killer of the

enemies, his kinsmen, and did no more think of leaving the kingdom mortified by grief. Thereafter he, his brethren, began to rule the kingdom, like Indra ruling in heaven. The enemies having been killed and Yudhisthira the son of Dharma, ascended the throne,—the clouds poured down adequate amount of rains, the earth bore all sorts of produce, the milch cows over-flooded the pasture ground with milk oozing out of their teats, the mountains became adorned with the green verdure of plants and creepers and the trees and plants growing in abundance in the forest bore the season fruits in plenty, throughout the different seasons. The three-fold miseries, Adhyatmika, Adhidaibika and Adhibhautika, of the subject were removed. (1-6).

With a view to console the friends in grief and also to comply with the earnest entreaty of Subhadra, his sister, Sri Krishna lived in Hastinapura for some months, and thereafter with the consent of Yudhisthira and having according to him friendly embrace, boarded the chariot to proceed to Dwaraka. At that time some embraced him, some bowed unto him and others showed him due honours, Dhaumya, Dhritarashtra, Kripa, Nakul, Sahadeva, Bhima, Juyutsu—the son of Dhritarashtra born of a Vaisya woman, and Subhadra, Draupadi, Kunti, Uttara, Satyabati and the other women,—being unable to bear the separation of Sri Krishna, fell into swoon. The learned ones on hearing the glories of the Lord Sri Krishna from the pious sages care not for their wives and children etc but become attached to the sages and wish to live in their company. The Pandavas became very fondly attached to Hari by reason of their constant association, seeing, embracing, talking, eating and lying down with him for a long time, and it was therefore very hard for them to bear the separation of Sri Krishna. On seeing that Vasudeva was about

to depart, all wistfully looked at him. Every one was rooted to the spot he stood on. Only at times some of them left the place to fetch articles of presents and worship (7-13).

When the son of Devaki left the inner apartments of Hastinapura, the women of the harem were all bathing in tears. But lest their tears would forebode evil unto him, they bore the tears on their eyes. All sorts of musical instruments were played in concert. The women of the Kuru family mounted on the roofs of palaces to have a parting look at Sri Krishna, and poured on him flowers and garlands with look full of love and affection. Arjuna held on the head of his dear friend a white umbrella the handle of which was set with diamonds and the skirts had frills of pearls. Uddhaba and Satyaki fanned him with two chamaras. Under the shower of flowers and with the garlands in his neck Sri Krishna the king of the descendants of Madhu looked wonderfully graceful. The Brahmanas present there blessed him to be happy. Even though Sri Krishna was both without attribute and ever enjoying eternal bliss, because of his then human manifestation, the blessings of the Brahmanas were both fit and unfit for him- (14-19).

The women of the family of Kuru began to enjoy on all sorts of topics on Sri Krishna. At that time every ear seemed to be personified and enjoying the pleasure of hearing the discourses on Sri Krishna. They began to say amongst themselves that Sri Krishna was the God Himself. There goes He who existed before the creation of the creation and naming of the attributes, and also existed in Himself at the time of destruction of the creation full of illusion though He Himself is beyond the illusion, and who conjoined with Prakriti, an emanation of Himself, with a view to create different names and forms of the varieties of the creation,—there goes that Primordial Being. He

revealed the Vedas with a view to set ritual rites and practices. How can we, ignorant women as we are, expect to see His lotus-like feet, on whom the austere sages meditate in mind by controlling breathe and the senses. Therefore, He should not be allowed to go far from, and must be followed by us. In Vedas and in all sacred scriptural treatises He has been named as God pervading all through the universe. He creates, preserves and destroys the whole Creation, and yet He does not become attached to anything (20-24).

When the kings become too full of the influence of Tamas and thus become altogether bereft of intellect and try to sustain them on ignominy and sin,—then does He, the emanation of Sattwa or Purity, manifests Himself in different yugas in different forms and maintains wealth, truth, sacred promise, the glory of the devouts and works out many wonderful feats. Ah! the glory of the Jadu family where the Lord has assumed Himself! Oh the fortunate aspect of the Brindavana, even the dust of which place has been turned holy by coming in contact with His feet. And there is no limit of the glory of Dwaraka' and even the earth is fortunate in having the place in her bosom. The heaven itself looks now dull in comparison with the present fame and glory, of the Earth For, in Dwaraka the people have ever the vision of the Great Soul, and thus they need have no anxiety in having His blessings, but do the gods even in heaven can have so easy access in seeing Him? The Gopis of Brindavana must have earned various virtues in their past lives to be blessed with the touch of His blissful palms. They had the opportunity to wistfully look at his lotus-like face. He showed wonderful might in the field of battle and having defeated the mighty Sisupala and other kings of valour he married Rukmini—the mother of Pradyumna, Jambabati—the mother of Samba, Nagnajiti—

the mother of Amba and Satyabhama etc and he also married thousands of other women after killing Bhauma. Those are the ladies who brought glories unto the obscure and ever-dependent name of women, for that possessor of lotus like eyes, Vasudava, did not go elsewhere from home by leaving those ladies. Even he sought to please them by procuring Parijat-flower (a celestial flower of that celebrated name) and other precious presents with a view to please them. (25-30)

While passing by them, he heard the ladies of the Kuru family thus speaking on him; and he cast a look on them, and thereby their words were well honoured. To safeguard him from all possible troubles, the king Yudhisthira sent with him an adequate number of four kinds of soldiers. Vasudeva saw the Kauravas being deeply moved by his separation were following him upto a long distance. He then addressed them sweet words and consoled them to return from thence. And with some dear ones He proceeded on, towards his own kingdom. Gradually he passed through Kuru-jangal, Panchala, Surasen, Jamun, Brahmabarta, Kurukshetra, Matsya, Saraswata, Maru and Swalpatoya Provinces one after another. The inhabitants of those provinces presented him with various presents and worshipped Him. In that long journey the Lord journeyed throughout the whole of the day in chariots. But even then his horses did not feel fatigued. Thus passing through many provinces Sri Krishna arrived in Dwaraka the country known as Anarta territory lying between the borders of Saubira and Abhira. (31-36).

CHAPTER XI.

SRI KRISHNA ENTERS THE CITY OF DWARAKA.

Suta said,—O Ye Brahmanas, on reaching the city of Dwaraka in the country known as Anarta, Sri Krishna began to blow the best of conch-shells celebrated by the name of Panchajanyá. The sound of the conch signified the approach of Sri Krishna, and it therefore allayed the grief of the people. With the reflection of his coral lips and crimson cheeks the milk-white colour of the conch shone beautifully, and the conch itself being blown in the hollow of his lotus-like palms resembled swans singing in the cluster of full blossomed lotuses. The tremendous sound of the celebrated conch of Sri Krishna produces terror into the hearts of the terrors of the world. So that it pleased the people, who earnestly approached their king and felt immensely glad at heart. Vasudeva was perfect emanation of the Lord of the Universe, He enjoys within Himself, and he has nothing without to seek for pleasures in. Yet, like that of offering light to the Sun-god, the citizens offered him various articles of presents. (1-4).

As children address and converse with their parents similarly the citizens addressed their king and protector with faces beaming with joy and in accents full of emotion. They said.—‘We do bow unto thy lotus-like feet, O Lord, the feet adored even by Brahma, Sanaka and the other Rishis and even Indra—the king of gods. Those who aspire after supreme good in this world, have got nothing else to take shelter under than that of placing themselves at your feet. For, Death which is all powerful and even overwhelms Brahma, is but powerless to thy feet. We do therefore bow unto thy feet. O thou adored of all in the universe, thou art our friend, master, father, preceptor and god of gods; thou art the cause of our

creation; we have been greatly pleased to have been able to place ourselves at your command; therefore do thou protect us all. O Lord, Thou art our king, and we have the fortune of beholding thy face beaming with smiles signifying supreme welfare, which the gods even aspire after.

What fortune could we expect than that? O thou lotus eyed! When you go to Hastinapura or Mathura with a view to see your friends there, due to your separation even a moment seems to us as lengthy as one crore of years. Just as want of sun causes blindness, similar was the case with us for want of your sight. All his evils are destroyed on whom you do even once smilingly look. It is, therefore, O Lord, that we are unable to pull on our existence without seeing your fascinatingly joyful face. (5-10).

On hearing the citizens so praising upon his glories, Sri Krishna smilingly looked upon them as a mark of favour and entered the capital city of Dwaraka. Just as Bhogabati (a river of that name of the nether region) is protected by the serpents, similarly Dwaraka was so long being guarded by the might of Madhu, Dasarha, Kukur, Andhaka and Brishnis, who were powerful like Krishna. The natural scenery of Dwaraka is ever beautiful, and captivating. Here the plants produce flowers of all the six seasons uniformly ever. Dwaraka is ever embellished with lakes full of lotuses, gardens full of variegated fragrant flowers and woods and orchards full of beautiful trees and shady bowers throughout all the different seasons. Now, on hearing that Sri Krishna was coming, the citizens added to the already beautiful natural sceneries of the city. They erected beautiful arches in front of the city and front doors of houses and equipped them with flags and flagstaves of various designs and colours. Due to the decorations the sun fell on them and could not shine in full into the city. Grand roads, streets, squares and shops etc were

cleanly swept and sprinkled with scents. Fruits, flowers, sundried rice and tender sprouts were strewn everywhere. Every house-door was decked with curds, grains of sundried rice, fruits, sugarcanes and with pitchers full of water and with holy offerings of incense and candles, (11—16).

On the return of dear Sri Krishna from abroad after a long time, Basudev, Akrur, Ugrasen, Balaram, Pradyumna, Charudeshna and Sambo became overwhelmed with joy. They cared not for sleep, rest or food and headed by one of the foremost of elephants fully decorated and with Brahmanas holding big bunches of flowers they proceeded towards Sri Krishna by chariots. The sounds from conches, Turiyas and chanting of mantras by Brahmanas filled up the atmosphere. And also advanced in chariots hundreds of women of the town all eager to behold Sri Hari. Their fair faces being fluttered over with curly locks wore a very charming spectacle, and the beauty of their faces was the more enhanced by the glowing reflection of their brilliant ear-rings. Actors of repute, dancers of celebrity, singers of note, scholars in antique lore, highly accomplished eulogists and bards all sung the wonderful glories of the son of Basudev of fair fame. (17-21).

The Lord Sri Krishna then showed due honours to his kinsmen, citizens, friends and dependents by bowing, saluting, embracing, touching of the hand, smilingly looking, presenting coveted gifts and assured them all of his protection and in due course he accorded due respects to the revered ones down to the low-born Chandalas (lowest category of the Sudra-sect). Then having received the benedictions from superiors, Brahmanas with their wives and being followed by the chorus sung by the bards and others, he entered into the city of Dwaraka. As Sri Krishna advanced along the broad roads of Dwaraka the females of zenana mounted the terraces of mansions all jubilant at the sight of Sri Krishna. They used to

behold him ever always, yet their longing to behold him was never satiated. Could the craving for His sight be at all expected to be fully satiated? His bosom is the abode of Sri (Lakshmi), his fascinating face was the drinking cup of all eyes, his arms were the might of the protectors of the regions and his lotus-like feet were the resort of the devouts. So that the more they behold on Him, the more grew their desire therefor, and the desire could never be fully satiated. (22-27).

He, the Lord, proceeded on the road with garlands on his neck, enhancing the sky-blue complexion of His, and the yellow colour of his clothes. White umbrellas were held over his head. From both his sides he was fanned with chamaras. Showers of flowers were poured on him from the terraces of palaces. With these he shone even as a cloud with the combined beauties of sun, moon, rainbow, stars and lightning. In due course Sri Krishna entered the house of his father, and worshipped his mother Devaki and the seventeen stepmothers, and bowed unto them touching his head on the ground. They also in their turn very affectionately embraced him and shedded tears of joy on his head, and being beside with joy they got their son on their lap and due to the overwhelming joy in their heart their breast began to automatically pour milk. He, the Lord, capable of granting all covetable objects, thereafter entered his own palace unsurpassed in points of beauty. That huge palace contained so many as sixteen thousand different suits wherein lived his sixteen thousand queens. All the queens had so long abstained from smiling, going to the houses of friends, attending societies and festivities and merry-making and even they did not take care of their persons practising as they did strict vows during the absence of their husband. Now that they saw their husband returning home after a long absence, all the queens sprang up in flurry of joy from their seats with flushed faces and abashed looks. On hearing of the approach

of their lord, first of all they embraced their husband in their hearts by dint of the depth of their soul, even before they actually saw him with their eyes. When in due course the lord came to their sight, they embraced him with their eyes. And when the lord actually came in front of them they embraced him in the person of their children. All of them were possessed of patience, they were restraining the tears of their eyes so long on account of their abashment, but with the growing emotions of their heart, they could no longer check the flow of tears, which dropped from their bashful and blushing eyes. The queens sat together in privacy and used to look upon the pair of his lotus-like feet, which put on new beauty every moment. What woman could remain unobservant of his feet which even Kamala (the goddess of Riches), fickle as she is known to be in her attachments, does not ever forsake (28-34).

Sri Hari assumed Himself on the earth, and sown the seeds of hostility among kings whose births and Akshouhinis of their soldiers only increased the already over-loaded burden of the earth. Just as the wind subsides after reducing to ashes the clusters of bamboo-canes in a forest by the fire formed of their mutual friction,—so also Sri Krishna caused the kings to kill one another with their respective numerous hosts, and at length attained tranquillity and repose, and with a heart full of joy and self-complacence He, the Lord, now revelled among the best of women even as an ordinary human being full of lust and frolicsomeness. Even Mahadeva (Shiva) dropped down his bow and arrow being charmed by the fascinating smiles and coy glances of ladies, but Sri Krishna's serenity of mind could not be agitated even by the amorous wiles of women of wonderful beauty. He is ever free from attachment, of any kind and only due to ignorance of their mind and also due to the likeness of human beings that the Lord possessed that they thought him to be attached ☞

actions. Even that illusory influence over the human beings is the active will of the Lord. Just as mind even though associated with the soul could not merge in the super-mundane joy of the soul, so the Lord though associated with Prakṛiti is never affected by its qualities. Even His queens could not fully perceive the greatness of His gravity. Silly women as they were, the queens were unaware of His greatness and thought him to be their slave endeavouring to minister to their humours. (36-40).



CHAPTER XII.

THE DESCRIPTION OF PARIKSHIT'S BIRTH.

^ Saunaka said,—O Suta, the mighty Brahmāstra as hurled by Aswathwama, almost destroyed the embryo in the womb of Uttara, and Krishna mercifully restored it to life. How in that embryo was born Parikshit of high intellect and great in mind? How was he also killed? And how did he fare after death? We are eagerly earnest to hear all these. If you will so please, do thou narrate all those incidents to us. Parikshit received initiation of knowledge from Suka. We are, also for that reason, so eager to hear all about him.

Suta said : Yudhisthira—the Piety incarnate—had ever unflinching devotion to the feet of Sri Krishna. For this reason he was able to keep himself above the influence of the senses, and with such an abstract mind he, like unto his sire, religiously ruled the kingdom. His subjects were fully satisfied under his rule. The king Yudhisthira's wealth, religious sacrifices, the virtuous merits thereby acquired, the illustrious wife and brethren, and his sovereignty over the earth encircled by the oceans were objects which even the gods in heaven highly esteemed, but these

could not however attract the king's mind. The whole thought of the king was so to say rivetted upon the meditation of Sri Hari's lotus-feet. O thou of Bhrigu's race as a hungry man's mind is upon the rice and not to be diverted by the thought of articles of luxury, so also the king Judhisthira did not feel attached to prosperous kingdom and its wealth. (1-6).

O son of Bhrigu, while in the womb of his mother for ten months scorched as he was then by the fiery Bramh-
astra of Aswathwama,—that great infant hero Parikshit beheld a Being of the dimensions of a thumb. That being was wearing a yellow raiment bright as a flash of lightning and the two pairs of His arms reached upto His knees, and earrings of the brightness of tried gold were swinging down His ears ; His eyes were blood-shot with rage ; and in His hand was a mace glowing like a meteor which He was blandishing with ceaseless celerity in all directions. Just as the sun dispels darkness by the rays, that mighty Being also neutralised the fiery Brahmastra with His dreadful mace. On beholding that celestial Being so near, Parikshit began to think as to who he was. Instantly then unapproachable through thought that mighty Lord of the universe vanished. (7-11).

Thereafter, at an auspicious moment, when all the propitious planets combined to signify the climax of blessings, the hero of the Pandu's dynasty Parikshit was born a second Pandu in prowess. On hearing that the grandchild was born, the king Judhisthira who was conversant with the duties of the time, was jubilant in mind and got the birth rites of the child performed by Brahmanas like Dhaumya and Kripa, and pronounced blessings on him. Then did the pious king give away gold, cows, land, villages, elephant and other precious gifts to the Brahmanas, who were thereupon exceedingly pleased and said, "O thou best of the Kauravas, this unsullied link of the family of Kurus was almost lost on account of the irresistible

influence of fate, but he has been saved by the All Powerful Lord Vishnu on account of His great love towards you all. You have got the boy alive only due to His mercy, and for this reason let him be named as Vishnurat *i. e.* Vishnudatta. There is not a shade of doubt that this boy will turn out a great hero and wonderfully pious."

Judhisthira asked,—“O Ye Brahmanas ! Will this child in due course be able to follow the illustrious marks left in the world by my glorious forefathers ? (12-18).

The Brahmanas replied,—“Partha ! This boy will in time become a king with the avowed duty of protecting the twiceborns like Ikshaku the son of Manu and truthful like Ramachandra the son of Dasaratha. He will become bountiful towards the poor and protector of those seeking protection like Sibi the son of Ushinara. Like that of Bharata his fame will be spread all around. And again, he will be equal in archery to Arjuna the son of Kunti and to that of Kartabirjarjuna. He will be indomitable like fire, unthwartable like the ocean, brave like a lion, enjoyable to the pious like the Himalayas, forgiving as earth, patient like parents, impartial like Brahma—the father of creation, benign and easily accessible like Mahadeva, and he shall be the stay of all creatures like Sri Krishna—the lord of Lakshmi. (19-23).

In glories of noble qualities, this boy will be like Sri Krishna, in broadness of mind he will be like Rantideva, and in devotion to Hari he will be equal to Prahlada. He will be like Vali in patience, and in merits of piety he will be equal like Yayati. He will perform many horse-sacrifices. He will be the progenitor of royal-sages. This your grand-child will show remarkable reverence to the aged. He will meet out proper punishments to those going astray from the path of religion, and for piety and supreme welfare of the earth he will punish Kali. And at long last, he will renounce all earthly pleasures and will die being bitten by the snake Takshaka to redeem

the curse imprecated on him by a Brahmana's son, and ultimately attain to the lotus—feet of Hari. O king, Vishnurata will, at the time of his death, renounce his person in the water of the Ganges while hearing from Suka a faithful account of himself, and thereby he will attain with ease to the state of *Brahman* where there is no fear." (24-28).

Those Brahmanas well versed in astrology thus acquainted the king about the future of the boy and after being duly worshipped repaired to their respective houses. The son of Abhimanyu, now being born, whenever he would see a human being would think within himself if he was the same Being whom he beheld when he was in the womb of his mother. Due to his thinking of the sort, he was known in the earth as Parikshit. Under the careful cares of his grand—fathers, the prince grew up gradually, as the moon increases by degrees during the full moon fortnight. Parikshit was by nature a devotee of Hari, and therefore even in his early years he was very fond of all for his religious bent of mind. (29-32).

The king Yudhisthira used to raise money by assessing revenues and by imposing fines. At that time, being desirous of performing a horse—sacrifice, he saw that he had not the necessary funds with him. He was, therefore, anxious for the means to raise the money required for the sacrifice. Thereupon Sri Krishna advised the other Pandavas to go to the North in quest of the money. He told to them about a place where a good many golden articles were kept stored after the great sacrifice performed by Marutta. The Pandavas found out the spot and brought those golden articles and in exchange thereof arranged everything necessary for the horse—sacrifice. At that time, being joyful at the prospect of his desires being fulfilled, the king Yudhisthira, who was very sorry and fearful on account of being the cause of destruction of his kinsmen, performed three horse-sacrifices

one after another, and thereby worshipped and propitiated the lord of sacrifices. On being invited Vasudeva attended the sacrifice and had it duly performed by Brahmanas. After the performance of the sacrifice Sri Krishna stayed for sometime at Hastinapura on being so requested by his friends. Thereafter he desired to return to his kingdom and with that end in view he took the consent of Draupadi and the king Yudhisthira and being accompanied by Arjuna and the Yadavas he proceeded towards Dwaraka. (33-37).

CHAPTER XIII.

DHRTARASHTRA RENOUNCES THE WORLD.

Suta said,—O Brahman ! While on pilgrimage, Bidura learnt from Sumantu that Sri Krishna was the ultimate goal of the soul. Having performed his tour on pilgrimage, Bidura returned to the city of Hastinapur. Bidura having gone out on pilgrimage, Yudhisthira with his brethren, Dhritarashtra, Juyutsu, Sanjaya, Kripa, Kunti, Gandhari, Draupadi, Subhadra, Uttara and the other women of their kinsmen and the friends of the Pandavas, all lived a soul-less life. Now, on hearing of his return, they stood up in joy and hurriedly advanced a long way to receive him in a mood which depicted animation of the body with the life reinstated therein. They came to him and received him with salutations, embracing and shedding tears of joy. After taking rest and refreshment, the high-souled Bidura was comfortably seated, when Yudhisthira accorded to him a great reverence, and very humbly asked,—“Do you yet remember us? Just as the young birds would be reared up under the protecting wings of their parents,—you saved us with our mother with particular fondness.

All of us have been saved by you from poison and fire in the plotted house of lac, (*Jatugriha* at Baranabata) and from similar other mal-treatments of the enemies. You have visited the notable pilgrimages and journeyed throughout the earth. Please tell me now on what did you live during your pilgrimage and how did you get them? Please also tell me what are the pilgrimages of note that you have visited. Persons who are devotees of 'Sri Krishna like yourself are as holy as the sacred places. Those who have always in their mind the image of *Gadadhara* (Weilder of a Mace—a name of Sri Krishna) do sanctify by their presence even the holy places. They have no other purpose to serve by visiting the pilgrimages. O thou revered like our parents, are our friends, the Jādavas, under the protection of Sri Krishna faring well in their capital city? Did you meet them? (1-11).

Thus being asked by Judhisthira, Bidura related to him everything in order, but as an abrupt report of the mortifying incident might upset the minds of the Pandavas, Bidura did not mention the destruction of the Jādavas. Thereafter Bidura lived there for some time being treated by his friends like a god. At that time he imparted many noble advice to his eldest brother Dhritarashtra, which pleased the ever-blind king very much. Bidura was known by all as a Sudra, but he was not so in reality. In consequence of a curse of the Rishi Mandavya,—Yama (the god of Death) assumed himself on earth in the form of Bidura. He suffered the curse for one hundred years. During the time of Yama's absence, the Sun held his scepter and served his duties. On seeing the face of the grand—son the king Judhisthira and his brethren thought that the line of the Bharata race has been maintained. Thereupon they were overwhelmed with joy and became attached to the world. (12-15).

On their being thus attached to the worldly affairs

with earnestness, the inevitable end approached them. Bidura understood this and spoke to Dhritarashtra saying,—“O king what have you been perceiving? A great terror has been approaching you. Do you now go away from the kingdom. Behold the all powerful end has approached us all. It is an illusion and ignorance to think of the course of inevitable Time to be thwarted by any body whatsoever. Time is irresistibly inevitable to all. Time coming on, one has got to unavoidably renounce even his dearest wife and children even, far less to talk of the other riches, (16-20).

O king! your father, brother, friends and sons have all expired, and you have become very old. The vitality of your life has been weakened through old age and diseases and you are living in another's house. You are blind from before and now you have become deaf, and the power of your understanding has become dull. Your teeth have dropped down and your appetite has gone and your body has now become full of phlegm,—and even yet your attachment to the world is not gone. Oh the love of life! O brother, Bhimsena has destroyed your sons, and you are now eating like a dog the food left by him, and that too through the love of your life which is but an illusion. You plotted to put them in fire, administered poison with their food and badly insulted their wife, and now O king you have been living on the food offered to you by them. Of what use that life is to you? Alas! The life for the sustenance of which you are putting up with such humiliation would not last and in time would be worn out and fall off like an old and worn out piece of cloth. (21-25)

He is called patient and tolerant who when becoming weak and unable to acquire fame and piety feels disgusted with the world and freed from all bonds of the ego repairs to the forest. He is called the best of men who by dint of his own keen intellect

or through advice of his well-wishers would discard the worldly pleasures and would leave the house for forest meditating Hari in his mind. You did not try to be the best of men in the past, and so it behoves you now to be patient. Without apprising anything to your relations do you now leave the house and proceed on towards the North. O king ! After this the inevitable time would in its inscrutable way come upon you and would eventually stripe you off the patience and other good qualities." (26-28),

Being thus advised by the highsouled Bidura,—his younger brother,—pointing out the way to freedom and salvation of the soul from the bondage of the world,—the blind king had the vision of knowledge and like one awakened from sleep and with the knots of worldly fetters snapped up, Dhritarashtra left the house without delay. As the arrows would proceed to the opponent heroes with great velocity, so Gandhari deeply attached to her husband followed him to the Himalayas whither he proceeded, with a view to attain to the holy place resorted to by the saints. The king Yudhisthira used to visit them every day and worshipped their feet. That day after performing the evening prayers and finishing his usual practice of giving away to Brahmanas mustard seeds, cows, land and precious jewels and thereby propitiating them went to the house of his uncles and aunt to offer them his salutes. But he did not find them there, and he saw only Sanjaya sitting there all alone. Being very much anxious, the son of Dharma then asked Sanjaya, "O son of Gabalgana, where hast my old, infirm and blind uncle gone ? And where has gone Gandhari, my aunt, who has been greatly grieved for the loss of her sons ? And also why do I not find Bidura, our friend and well-wisher ? I am very evil-natured. I have killed his sons, and now has he on that account felt anxious about his life from me and jumped into the Ganges ? After the death of our father,

Pandu,—both of our uncles treated us very dearly and saved us from all troubles. Where have they both gone to now?" (29-34).

Suta said,—Sanjaya used to accord very high reverence to Dhritarashtra, and therefore he was very much grieved at heart for his absence. And overwhelmed so great was he then that he could not give any reply to Yudhisthira readily. Thereafter wiping off his tears with his own hands and consoling his mind by dint of intellect, he spoke to Yudhisthira, remembering the feet of Dhritarashtra with great reverence :—"O Yudhisthira, the worthy scion of the glorious family ! I do not know where have your uncles and aunt gone to. I can tell you this much that the high-minded ones have played tricks upon me." While Yudhisthira and Sanjaya were thus talking to each other greatly moved in mind,—there arrived then the divine-sage Narada with the stringed musical instrument in his hand. On seeing the divine-sage, Yudhisthira reverentially stood up and worshipped him befittingly, and thereafter humbly enquired of him saying,—“O thou godly one ! I do not know where to both my uncles and my aunt Gandhari deeply mortified by the loss of her sons have repaired. Without finding them I have been thrown, as it were, into an ocean of anxiety and I do beseech you to tide me over the difficulty like that of a helm-man steering a boat in troubled waters. Please be good enough to tell me where have they all gone to.” (35-40).

The divine-sage Narada thereupon replied, "O king ! do not be overwhelmed with grief. The world is controlled by God. Even Indra the king of gods and the gods themselves protecting the quarters are but thereby serving God who is not dependent on anybody. As puppets under the controlling manipulation of the player, so also in this universe human beings are brought together and separated according to the will of the Lord of the universe.

Then again, if you would regard the soul to be eternally indestructible and the body garbing the soul to be destructible, and again if you would take both of them to be materially indescribable,—on no account it behoves thee to be aggrieved for any one either from worldly affection or through ignorance. There is no other cause of grief than that of affection arising out of attachment. Therefore, your anxiety as to how your uncles and aunt would live without your cares and protection and how very much they might have been suffering from various discomforts are vain and it does not behove thee to be affected thereby. Do you, therefore, remove thy folly and fickleness caused by the weakness of thy mind. (40-45).

This earthly body is made up of five elements and is subject to the influence of Time and Actions, and this body therefore falls off with the component elements being naturally separated. How can therefore this body may be protected by another? O king, one devoured by an *Ajagar* (a serpent of bulky form known by that name possessing dreadful and virulent poison) cannot protect another. Every creature gets his livelihood according to the determined ordain of the Providence. Man lives on the animal, and the animals in their turn live on vegetables. To state in brief, the inferior is the life of the superior, and on this earth one animal is the life of another. And as such what is the utility of your feeling anxious for the sustenance of your uncle and aunt? Again, man, beast and bird are all identical with God, none has any separate existence, and God is one—not more than one. He eats and He is again the eatables, He enjoys and He is the objects of enjoyment. All apparently visible distinctions are but due to ignorance. It is merely by illusion that He is seen as many. O Maharaj! That great God has now assumed Himself as Time for the destruction of the Asuras and has been living

in Dwaraka. He has already served the cause of the gods, and is now awaiting the complete destruction of the remaining descendants of the Jadu family. When this mission will be fulfilled, He will then withdraw to His celestial abode. Do you all remain on this earth so long as the Lord is here. (46-50).

The king Dhritarashtra with his brother and wife has repaired to Himalaya—the hermitage of the Rishis on the south of Himalaya mountain. For the satisfaction of the seven Rishis, here the Ganges has divided herself into seven streams, by reason of which the place is known as the holy shrine of seven streams. Bathing in that stream, drinking of its water, offering oblations into fire and abstaining from food,—there lives the King Dhritarashtra having controlled his mind by processes of the eight disciplinary yogas and released himself from all earthly desires. He is no longer anxious for his sons. By process of yoga he has practised the posture of sitting and controlled the flow of his breath. Due to devotion to and meditation upon Hari the three influences of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas have been lost on him. He has therefore been practised in concentration and meditation. He has now understood the separateness of the soul from the body which is the object of the ego. He has also been able to understand the real soul and the intellect, the latter as the instrument of intuition. Just as the demarcated portion of the sky visible in the earthen pot disappears with the breaking up of the pot, so also the individual soul fully merges into the Great Soul or Brahman. O king! Your uncle has been able to understand this much also. So that he has been able to appreciate an union of the individual soul with the Great Soul. To disengage the mind from yoga is known as *Buthhan*. There is no such possibility of *buthhan* on the part of your uncle, for he has baffled the future result of *Maya* and has controlled the senses and the mind. For this reason he

is no longer desirous of enjoying the earthly pleasures. He lives there as firm as the trunk of a tree. (51-55).

The bondage of his actions has been destroyed. Therefore do not be his hindrance in getting him to return thence. On the fifth day from this day he shall renounce his body, and thereupon that body shall of itself be turned into ashes. When his body will be burnt into the *Homa* fire along with the thatched cottage of the hermitage,—Gandhari so firmly attached to her husband shall also follow him. O Ye king of the Kuru-race, you should not also go to fetch Bidura, for he will be overwhelmed with joy and grief on seeing the wonderful death and the nature of the merit thus obtained by his brother. Thereafter Bidura will proceed therefrom on pilgrimage." Saying all these, Narada, with the stringed instrument (*Vina*) in his hand repaired to his celestial abode. And Judhishthira consoled himself and renounced his grief by meditating on the words of the Divine-sage (56-60).

CHAPTER XIV.

QUERY OF THE KING JUDHISTHIRA TO ARJUNA

Suta said,—Brahman, Arjuna went away to Dwaraka to learn all about the movements of Sri Krishna and the other friends and relations there. But although seven months elapsed after his departure, Arjuna did not return to Hastina. In the meantime the king Judhishthira was always seeing various terror-inspiring evil omens. The course of time became gradually the more dreadful. The seasons became changed, inasmuch as the fruits and flowers of a particular season would be found to be borne in other seasons. The people were found to be given up to anger, avarice, and falsehood, and they sustained themselves on

sinful acts. The conduct of the people became deceitful. Dissensions between son and parents, friends, brothers and between husband and wife grew unusually. The king observed the tendency of the people towards all sorts of avarice and vices and also espied the evil omens of various description, and thereupon he said to his younger brother Bhimsena,—“Brother, Arjuna has gone to Dwaraka to see Sri Krishna and the other friends and relations there and to know all about their movements. Seven long months pass away thereafter but Arjuna returns not. I do not know the cause of this. I understand from Narada, the divine-sage that Sri Krishna now desires renouncing his earthly body assumed on illusion. O Bhimsena, is that time really come? From Sri Krishna followed all that we have achieved and from him we have received all our worldly possessions such as wealth, kingdom, wives, lives, family, sons and victory over the enemies, and also the virtues that we have acquired through the performances of the vedic sacrifices at the instances of Sri Krishna,—the virtues by dint of which we shall attain heaven. Brother, it seems that the words of Narada have now been fructified. Behold the earthly, divine and physical dreadful omens are now seen always. This clearly portends that our fear is but near. My breast, eyes, hands and heart are throbbing as from grave fear, and from this I apprehend calamity will befall us very soon. (1-11).

“O my brother, see then that just on seeing the rising of the sun, jackals having faces like glowing meteors are crying their loudest emitting fiery flames as it were. The dogs are not showing any the least fear at my sight, and are on the other hand jumping and barking. The cows and the like other animals of fortunate look are for the last few days going about keeping me always on their left. The asses and the like other animals of ominous look are going round me. My horses are shedding incessant tears. Yonder you see the pigeon which looks like a harbinger of death.

The owl there and its rival in shrill cry the crow are shrieking in a dreadful way that shakes my heart. They have combined, so to say, to divest the universe of all creatures. The horizontal lines look like a grey circle. The earth with the mountains on it is shaking frequently. The tremendous reports of lightning without any cloud in the sky are heard. Ah, you see, how hard the wind blows bearing fiery flames with it and envelopes the earth with darkness by dust in whirlwind.. The clouds are pouring on all sides showers of blood. See you the sun lost its lustre. The planets in the firmament are at war, as it were, amongst each other. The earth and the heaven are set ablaze through the combined effect of the evil spirits and ominous animals. (12-17).

Rivers, streams and lakes have been perturbed. All beings are uneasy in mind. Wonder is that even with clarified butter fire does not burn. I am unable to ascertain what more calamities the future would reveal. The calves are not suckling and the mother cows also do not give milk, and they are weeping all the time. The bulls are not roaming about in their usual majestic gait in the pasture ground. The images of gods and goddesses are always perspiring and shaking as through fear and they look to be in tears and are moving about in extreme anxiety. All habitations, villages, cities, gardens, mines and hermitages are shorn of their respective beauty and gracefulness. I do not know what a calamity awaits us. Perhaps the earth has been bereft of its prosperity, and has been deprived of the stamp of banner and mace etc as displayed by the Lord Sri Hari's feet." (18-21).

O Brahman, when the king Judhisthira was thus meditating upon all those evil omens, Arjuna having the monkey brand upon his chariot returned from the city of the Jadus, and he bowed down before the king, his elder brother. The king saw that Dhananjaya was weeping profusely and his look was fixed on the ground. Drops of

tears flowed down incessantly from his eyes which were like a pair of blue lotus. His ever courageous heart was palpitating and his features looked shorn of all his usual gracefulness. The king had never before seen him so very much dejected, and remembering the prediction of Narada, he became extremely anxious. Then Arjuna having taken rest, the king asked him in anxiety before his friends and kinsmen,—“O Arjuna, how our relatives and friends the Madhus, the Bhojas, the Dasarhas, the Ahas, the Satyatas, the Andhakas and the Vrishnis are faring? Does our venerable maternal grand-father, Shoora, fare well? Is it all right with our maternal uncle Basudeva and his younger brother? Our seven aunts Devaki and her sisters, are they faring well with their daughters-in-law? The son of the king Ugrasena is a villain and I, therefore, would not ask anything about him. Is Ugrasena himself as also his younger brother living? How do Kritavarma, Jayanta, Gada, Sarana, Satrujit and the other brethren of Krishna as also the merciful lord of the devotees Balarama faring? Is that great warrior, Pradyumna, of the family of Vrishnis all right? Is Aniruddha, who wears wonderful costume and contour in the battle field, without any trouble? (22-30).

Are the reputed sons of Sri Krishna viz. Charudeshna, Shusen, and Shamba, the son of Jambabati, faring well? Are Rishava and others faring well with their sons? Srutadeva, Uddhava and other followers of Sri Krishna, and Shunanda, Nanda and other great devotees, live absolutely upon the graces of Balarama and Sri Krishna. We are in very good terms with all of them; are they all faring well? O my brother, do they all remember us often? Is Sri Krishna, the ever well-wisher of the Brahmanas, living happily in his own quarters, wherein is established the arena named *Shudharma* as of the gods in heaven. That Primordial Being Sri Krishna and also the eternal godhead Balarama have been born in the family of Jadus

for the welfare, sustenance and salvation of the people. They are living in the city of Dwaraka protected by the might of Sri Krishna, and thus they are living happily being respected by all in the three regions of the world. The sixteen thousand wives of Sri Krishna, — Satyabhama and the others, — do prefer serving the feet of their husband rather than giving themselves upto religious course of discipline. The king of the Jadavas fetch them the celestial flower Parijata etc by defeating the gods in heaven, so that they live in this earth like Sachi, the queen of Indra, the king of gods. The heroic Jadavas are protected by the might of Sri Krishna, and ever undauntedly they tread upon the arena of the celestial assembly Sudharma worthy of the gods. Is that great Govinda faring well? (31-38).

Art thou yourself well, my brother? Why do you look so dejected and damp in spirit? You were with the friends for an unusually long time and did you, therefore, meet with any uncourteous behaviour accorded by them? Have you been sent away with words savouring slight and unbrotherliness? Have you been unable to give any thing to the seekers of alms for your own want? Or were you unable to redeem your promise of giving any thing to any body? You are ever a protector of the people, and have you been unable to protect a Brahmana, a boy, a cow, an old man, a patient, a female, who might have sought your shelter? Have you visited any unworthy woman living a vicious life? Have you forsaken any worthy woman merely on account of her being poorly dressed? Hast thou been defeated on the way by any one either superior to thee or thy equal? Have you taken your meals forsaking a hungry boy or an old man? Well, have you committed any act of iniquity? Have you been separated from Sri Krishna, best of your friends? There must at any rate be some evil falling upon thee, or else why have you been suffering this sort of grave

mental affliction ? Be that what it may, tell me the cause of this your mental trouble." (30-34)

CHAPTER XV.

JUDHISTHIRA AND HIS BROTHERS REPAIR TO HEAVEN.

Suta Said,—O thou Indra among the Brahmanas, Arjuna was already very much emaciated on account of his separation from Sri Krishna. Moreover, on seeing that the king Judhisthira anticipated various sorts of calamities, Arjuna felt his tongue and throat dried up, and he was shorn of all gracefulness. He was at that time meditating upon his lord (Sri Krishna) and therefore he could not readily reply. With great effort he subdued his grief and controlled the incessant flow of tears. He became the more overwhelmed gradually on not finding Sri Krishna before him. Thereafter remembering the many friendly and brotherly deeds of Madhava, with his voice choked with emotion he addressed his elder brother, the king Judhisthira, the following words :—"O Maharaj, Hari has played tricks upon me in the guise of a friend. He has taken away my great effulgence which created astonishment in the minds of even the gods in heaven. (1-5).

Just as the departed souls of dear parents are called *Pretas* (Spirits) similarly even on momentary separation from Sri Krishna all people lose their gracefulness. It was through the might of the Lord Sri Krishna that I was able to defeat the powerful kings possessed by passion and assembled at the Swayamvara of Draupadi at the palace of the king Drupada, and shooting down the golden fish by an arrow I won Draupadi. It was through the help and favour of Vasudeva that I offered the Khandava

forest in whole to the God of Fire (*Agni*), defeating Indra with all other gods protesting. It was through the favour of my lord Sri Krishna that I was then able to save the wonderful artist Maya (A Rakshasa) possessing magical powers by whom was constructed the wonderful arena at the time of your great Rajasuya sacrifice. It was through the might of lord Sri Krishna that your younger brother Bhimsena possessing the prowess of an *ajuta* (ten thousand) elephants was able to kill Jarasandha who kept subdued under his control all other kings. You may yet remember that when you undertook to perform the Rajasuya sacrifice,—that king Jarasandha also initiated himself to the Mahabhairaba sacrifice and for that purpose kept confined in his capital city all the kings of the earth. Bhimsen released all those confined kings and princes by killing Jarasandha, and those kings then brought grateful tributes to your sacrifice. O king, the vicious minded Dushwasana and the other sons of Dhritarashtra held your wife Draupadi by the beautiful braid which had been sanctified by the sprinkling of holy waters at the great Rajasuya sacrifice. Being thus insulted by them, your devoted wife Jainaseni with tears in her eyes fell at the lotus-like feet of Sri Krishna. It was through the grace of the lord then that Bhimsena rendered husbandless the wives of those evil minded ones and shorn them of their hairs. (6-10).

When we were in the forest, at the instance of the evil-minded Durjodhana, the mighty sage Durvasa went to us to be fed with his ten thousand disciples,—and we were then fallen into a great calamity in the shape of incurring imprecation of a curse from that sage. At that time Madhava saved us all from that predicament by himself eating the remnant of vegetables that was with the cooking utensils, by which act of His the sage with his disciples bathing in the water of the lake felt themselves fed to their fill and went their way thence

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It was through the might of the son of Basudev that I surprised *Siva* and *Durga* by my skill in arms and they then were pleased to award me the *Pasupata* weapon, and similarly the other divinities also were pleased to give me various celestial weapons. It was through the favour of the lord Sri Krishna that I went to heaven in this my human form and Indra, the king of gods, offered me to sit on the half of his great seat. O Maharaj, it was by His might that these my powerful pair of arms holding the Gandiva bow were sought by the celestials headed by Indra having been cognisant of my power of arms for the destruction of Nivatkavacha and other demons. O Maharaj, I have now been separated from that friend and protector who now assuming His own self has played upon me. It was by his friendship that I in a single chariot succeeded to cross over the ocean of the Kaurava army consisting of heroes gifted with invincible prowess such as Bhishma and others. Also at the time when the Kauravas invaded the capital city of the king of Virata and intended to forcibly take away the cows of the king I was able to defeat and keep the Kauravas spell-bound, seized their wealth and snatched away from their person the gem-studded turbans etc. At the battle of Kurukshetra the lord Sri Krishna was before me in the shape of my charioteer and by his mere look He deprived Bhishma, Karna, Drona, Salya and other heroes of the enemy army of their enthusiasm, tenacity, strength, and skill in the use of arms. (11-15).

Maharaj, as in the days of yore the *Asuras* inspite of their best efforts were unable to inflict any injury to Prahlada,—similarly having been sheltered by the pair of arms of Narayana, ever merciful to the devotees, I was able to baffle the irresistibly powerful weapons of Drona, Bhurisrava, Susarma—the king of Trigarta, Salya, Jayadratha and Balhika. Alas! What a foolishness I

had then. I engaged Him to serve me as a charioteer whom the best of men meditate upon for absolute salvation. In the attempt at killing Jayadratha, when my steed of the chariot became fatigued, I had them drink water raised from earth pierced through by an arrow. At that time my enemies could easily kill me by shooting arrows on me, but as willed by the Lord my enemies were just at that time unmindful of the opportunity and therefore they were unable to prevail upon me. O King, the selflessness and friendly treatment that Madhava accorded towards me and also the sweet words of His in addressing me as 'O dear friend', 'O Partha', 'O Arjuna', 'O the son of Kuru', all those are stored up in my mind. I feel my heart pressed hard and twisted as it were whenever I recollect on them. Due to our very close intimacy, we two used to sleep on the same bed, sit on the same seat, eat from the same plate, walk together and admired one another. If on any occasion per chance anything happened contrary to His words, then I used to slight him saying 'Oh what a speaker of truth thou art'. But just as a friend excuses the fault of a friend and a father forgives the folly of his son, Sri Krishna in his magnanimity used to excuse me for all my faults. O king, what you anticipated has really come to pass. That Great Purusha has now left me. My body is now soul-less. I was escorting His sixteen thousand wives. In my way some low born Gopas attacked and defeated me as easily as they could do a helpless woman. (16-20).

I have got the same bow, arrow, chariot and horses, and I myself am the same. In the past the enemy kings had to lower their heads before all these. But instantly with the separation of Sri Krishna, the Lord of the Universe, everything has become useless. Just as offering of oblations of clarified butter in ashes even with due utterances of proper mantras would not serve any purpose, and just as receiving of wealth from a magician

does not prove a real gain, and as sowing of seeds on barren soil does not produce fruits,—similarly on account of separation from Sri Krishna I have become worthless. O king, you have enquired of the welfare of our friends, the Jadavas. Under the curse of a Brahmana, and due to drinking of wine they seemed not to recognise each other and slew each other striking by *Eraka* grass held in their clenched fists. Some four or five of them are now surviving. It is the will of the Lord Narayana that all beings of the universe would sustain and destroy each other. O king, just as big fishes in the water swallow up the small ones, so also comparatively stronger creatures destroy those inferior to them. By the same order Sri Krishna got the weaker ones of the Jadavas killed by the stronger ones, and thereby lightened the burden of the Earth. Maharaj, I am unable to go on with the narration any longer. I am fully overwhelmed on remembering the significant words of consolation spoken timely by Govinda." (21-27).

Suta began,—Arjuna began to meditate upon the lotus like feet of Sri Krishna out of deep intimacy that existed between them. Thereby his intellect became free from grief and cleansed of the worldly attachment. The instructions on Jnana line that Vasudeva imparted to Arjuna at the time of the battle of Kurukshetra, had remained enshrouded in Arjuna's mind on account of the influence of time, earnest attention to actions, and attachment towards worldly possessions. But now that the table had turned, with the meditation of the feet of Hari, his devotion towards the instructions worked with great vehemence, and it destroyed his passions entirely. So that Jnana prevailed upon predominantly in his mind. With Jnana prevailing he understood himself as *Brahman*, and that understanding destroyed from his mind the illusion of ignorance. With the destruction of *Avidya*,

or ignorance, the influence of the three *Gunas* viz *sattwa* etc ceased. With the cessation of the influence of the *Gunas*, his mist of doubts on the duality of God and the Universe was removed. Thus Arjuna with the knowledge of his real self *atman* became conscious of his soul being separated from his gross body and understood his past spiritual ignorance and its actions. The king Judhisthira,—learning of the course of the Lord Sri Krishna and the destruction of the Jadavas,—then made up his mind to renounce the world and repair to heaven. Kunti too on hearing from Dhananjaya the destruction of the Jadavas and the course adopted by the Lord, had her mind concentrated through her single-minded devotion to Hari, and retired from the world.

O Brahman, I have already recited the various points of difference between Sri Krishna and the other Jadavas, and now you may yourself understand it from the course of action adopted by Him. Like that of extricating a thorn by a thorn, He assumed His body as a Jadava and thereby He destroyed the burden of the Earth. (28-34).

Like an actor acting on the stage, He assumed and renounced His different forms such as a Fish and others (as referred to in the ten incarnations of the Lord). From the day the Great Mukunda withdrew His human form from the world, Kali Yuga, the source of evil to the ignorant, set in. The king Judhisthira was very wise and on perceiving the approach of Kali in his city, kingdom, palace and on themselves, and understanding the order of avarice, falsehood, hypocrisy, envy and other sins, he resolved upon to repair to heaven and accordingly dressed himself. Thereafter the emperor Judhisthira installed in the throne of Hastinapur his grandson Parikshit, who was his equal in accomplishments, as the emperor of the kingdom girt

by the ocean. He also appointed Bajra, the lord of Surasena in the city of Mathura. Thereafter the king performed the sacrifices relating to Prajapati and the gods and by virtue of yoga placed within himself the three forms of fire viz, Garhapatya etc. At that time the king threw into the fire his bracelets, ear-rings and the other ornaments as usually worn by kings. He also became free from affections, pride etc and severed all worldly attachment. Thereupon he offered his power of speech as an oblation to the mind ; mind into Prana (vital air) ; Prana into Apana ; and Apana with all bodily activities he offered to the God of Death ; death into the component of the five elements (body, the elements being *Khiti, Ap, Teza, Marut, and Byom*) ; the body into three qualities (*Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas*) ; he offered the three qualities to his own self and finally he offered himself unto the One Absolute Ultimate Brahman—the Great Soul. He wore tattered clothes, observed fasting, refrained from speaking and his hairs remained dishevelled, so that he appeared to be a stupid, maniac or a wizard. He did not pay heed to any body's words ; he did not wait for any body ; he alone left the Palace and meditating in his mind upon the Parama-Brahma (the One Absolute Ultimate Brahman) he proceeded on towards the North. His great ancestors had also, at the end of their days, repaired to the North, whence no one returns. And his brothers (Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva) also beholding their subjects possessed by the evil influences of Kali yuga resolved upon and followed their elder brother Yudhisthira. (35-45).

They had performed all religious rites, and considering the lotus-like feet of the Lord of *Baikuntha* (Vishnuloka) as the summum bonum of life, they meditated upon them. Through meditation their faith increased and intellect became purified and thus they acquired whole-hearted devotion to the feet of Narayna who is the one

eternal refuge of those freed from sins, the glorious consummation which is never attainable by the sinful ones. Bidura also in the course of his tour on pilgrimage arrived at Pravasha and meditating in his mind Sri Krishna, the idol of his life, renounced his body and repaired to his habitation welcomed by the Pitris. On finding her husbands departing one by one without caring for the others, Draupadi also engaged herself to the meditation upon the Lord Vasudeva and attained Him. The Pandavas are the dear ones of the Lord Sri Krishna and their departure above referred to is highly holy. Those who will earnestly hear of this holy narration of the departure of the Pandavas from this world shall acquire devotion to Sri Hari and attain in the end release from future births. (46-56).

CHAPTER XVI.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN DHARMA AND BASUMATI

Suta said,—O Brahman Saunaka, thereafter Parikshit who was greatly devoted to God, began to rule the earth in accordance with the instructions of the Brahmanas. Just as a pious man would do the rituals relating to the birth of a male child according to the advice of Brahmanas conversant with the same, so also the king Parikshit discharged all his duties as a king with the permission of the Brahmanas. Parikshit married Irabati, the daughter of the king Uttara. He begot upon the daughter of the king Uttara gradually four sons viz. Janmejaya and others. The king Parikshit made Kripa his spiritual guide and performed on the banks of the Ganges successively three Horse sacrifices and distributed ample gifts. In those sacrifices of the king all the

ceiestials were visible to the men present. While proceeding on in spreading his conquests, one day the emperor Parikshit saw Kali in the person of a Sudra wearing the apparel and insignia of a king, and striking with his feet the couple of a cow and a bull. (1-4),

Saunaka enquired,—O Suta, why did the king Parikshit at the time of making conquests merely punished Kali and did not kill him? He who was striking a cow wearing the apparel of a king was a lowly Sudra; why then did the king refrained from killing him? O thou great saint, if the subject matter of the narration enquired of relate to Sri Krishna or His devotees ever drinking the honey of His lotus-like feet, then only do thou relate to us the story, or else you need not narrate it; for fussy discourse is of no other avail than wasting ones life time. The God of Death who is the end of those having a limited span of life has been invoked and invited here to accept sacrifices of beasts. So long as the God of Death will stay here, no one shall be possessed by the influence of the cycle. It is for this reason that the great saints have summoned the God of Death (*Yama*). Now that people are without any anxiety, let them drink the elixir of the discourses on the glories of Hari. The life of the indolent and the evil-minded, limited as it is, is being spent uselessly, the night is spent in sleep and the day in unworthy actions, (5-10).

Suta said,—O Brahman, skilled in battle the king Parikshit while living in Kurujangal (Hastinapur) heard that Kali has entered into his kingdom. Burning with anger and being eager for battle. with pleasure he took up his bow for the purpose. Immediately his chariot yoked with blue coloured horses with the flag on it bearing the emblem of a lion thereon became ready well equipped. The king mounted on the chariot and went out for conquests surrounded by his own army consisting of chariots, horses, elephants and infantry. Gradually and one by one the.

king conquered Vadraswa, Ketumal, Uttar-Kuru, Kimpurusha and other Varshas and exacted tribute from the kings of the territories. The people of the countries sung to him the glories of Sri Krishna and of his great ancestors, the escape of his own self from the perilous weapon of Asswathwama, the close friendship between the Jadavas and the Pandavas and their devotion to Sri Krishna. The son of Abhimanyu became very much delighted to hear them so singing. His eyes expanded with the inward joy he felt. With immense pleasure the king Parikshit conferred on the people valuable clothes and precious necklaces. (11-16).

He heard from the singers that Vishnu, at whose feet the three regions of the world bow down, served the Pandavas as their charioteer, the mediator, the president of their council, protector of the gates at night as a sentinel sword in hand, orderly, and praiser of their glories and that the lord even bowed down to the Pandavas. Thereupon Parikshit became devoted to His lotus-like feet. When Parikshit eagerly heard the glories of his ancestors recited by the people daily, a wonderful incident occurred, and let me relate the story to you. At that time the God of Piety in the guise of a Bull was roaming about on one foot and saw the Earth (Basumati) shorn of all graces in the guise of a cow that had lost her calf and with her face cast down weeping all the while. Thereupon Dharma came by Basumati and asked : "O good lady, how do you do ? From your dull colour and pale countenance I presume you to have been suffering a deep mental agony. O my mother, are you pining for a relative away from you for a long time ? Are you aggrieved to find me on one leg and the three others broken ? Are you painfully thinking of the future when Sudra Kings will enjoy you ? Now-a-days people no longer perform any sacrifice, and are you therefore sorry for the celestials deprived of their share of sacrifices ? Are you sorry for the people suffering for

scarcity of rain as Indra do not now pour down adequate quantity of water in proper season? In these days the wives and the children are not protected by the husbands and parents and on the other hand they behave very cruelly, and are you sorry therefor? The Goddess of Learning (Sarasvatī) has now been living in the houses of Brahmanas devoid of their dutifulness, and even the best of Brahmins are serving the Kshatriyas who treat the Brahmanas with contempt, are you sorry for that reason, O mother?" (17-22)

Under the influence of Kali the Kshatriyas have now become idlers, are you sorry therefor? or are you sorry for the dismemberment of the kingdom of those indolent kings? Are you sorry, O mother, for the subjects who are, contrary to the injunctions of the sastras, at will and ease freely eating, drinking sleeping, staying, and enjoying women? The glorious deeds performed by Hari in different incarnations are more efficacious than even the heavenly bliss, are you sorry for His leaving you now and have you been lamenting over His sweet memories? O Basundhara, please tell me the cause of your agony which has rendered you so dull and emaciated. Has your good graces, once envied by the celestials, now been stolen away by the powerful evil influence of the present cycle of time?" (23-25).

The Earth replied,—O Dharma, you yourself know all about which you ask of me! Yet, I am telling you everything. In the past by the grace of the Lord Sri Krishna you were on your four legs and you were the cause of happiness and prosperity of the people and truth, purity, kindness, charity, forgiveness, contentment, simplicity, equality, controlling the senses, attachment to respective religion, asceticism, impartiality, resignation, indifference to loss or gain, study of the sastras, knowledge of the self, renunciation, self-control, bravery, strength of determination, might, dutifulness, independence.

taetfulness, beauty, patience, mildness of temper, sharpness of intellect, modesty, good manners, talent, sharpness of understanding, gravity, calmness, respectfulness, fame, devotion, want of pride, welfare of the Brahmanas, affording protection to the helpless, these qualities aspired after by the noble-minded saints ever existed in the Lord,—that Srinivasa full of those qualities and without any decay has now renounced his human form and left the world. And now the evil influence of Kali has fallen on the people. Alas ! That is the cause of my sadness. (26-31).

O thou best of the celestials, I lament for the future for myself, for you, the celestials, the saints, the Pitris, the four Varnas (Seets) and the Asramas (Stages). O thou foremost of the immortals, I am unable to bear the separation from Sri Krishna Just consider, he, to behold on whom for a moment Brahma and other celestials even ever keep themselves engaged in meditation, and for the purpose of serving whose feet Kamala engaged herself renouncing her own habitation Kamalalaya (the house of lotuses) and being adorned with whose foot marks containing banner, club and hook I had the beauty matchless in the three worlds. My pride knew no bounds on the acquirement of the wealth imparted to me by God. Perhaps due to that pride the said object of pride has been lost and He also has left me. The hundreds of Akshauhinis of armies of the kings of Asuras formed huge burden on me. To lighten that huge burden on me, the merciful Lord assumed Himself in the family of Jadus in charming person. At that time you were also crippled of your legs but He restored you also to your happiness and you moved about with pleasure on your four legs. Can any woman bear the separation of that exquisitely beautiful person ? Even so grave and conceited women Satyabhama and others were moved by His amorous askanee looks, sweet smiles and words, and then they could not preserve their gravity and they used to

take shelter of His lotus-feet. While Banamali (a name of Sri Krishna) treaded on my breast stamping the foot marks, my hairs stood on their end in the shape of young blades of green grass. Oh the beauty I had being smeared with the dust raised by the feet of Madhusudan (a name of Sri Krishna)." While the Earth and Dharma (the God of Piety) were thus conversing, the king Parikshit arrived at the bank of the river Saraswati flowing to the East. (32-37).

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SUPPRESSION OF KALI BY PARIKSHIT.

Suta said,—O foremost of the Brahmanas, the king Parikshit arrived at the bank of Saraswati and there he saw a Sudra wearing the guise of a king and with a club in his hand beating a helpless bull and a cow. The bull was as white as a lotus-stalk. On being mercilessly beaten by the Sudra, the bull was frequently passing urine, and was trembling on his one leg out of great fear. The cow looked to be milked by the god of piety. She was greatly fatigued on account of the kicks on her by the Sudra. She became very weak and while weeping as a mother separated from her child, she was attempting at grazing grass. The king Parikshit saw all these from his chariot. He then put on his gold embroidered apparel and having set his bow with arrows addressed the Sudra in words so sounding like rumbling of clouds :—"Who are you? Why are you so audacious as to oppress my subjects? You have been appearing like an actor playing the role of a king in a stage. But your action proves you to be a Sudra. Krishna and Arjuna, the wielder of Gandiva, have now departed, and is it therefore that thou feel it safe to kill

innocent animals in lonely places ? For the great sin thus incurred you should be inflicted with capital punishment." (1-6).

Thereafter the king addressed the Bull in these words :—"Who art thou ? Art thou a celestial in the guise of a bull and roaming about on one leg to make us feel sad therefor ? How have you lost your other three legs ? The Kauravas protect the subjects in this earth and make them happy. I have not seen any one but you shedding tears. O son of Suravi, don't you shed any more tears. You have no more to fear from this wicked Sudra." Thereafter the king addressed the cow full of tears :—"O mother, you too do not weep any more. I punish the wicked. Myself living, you will fare well. O pious mother, that king loses his fame, longevity, and fortune in whose kingdom the subjects are oppressed by the wicked. The highest merit of a king consists in removing distress of the distressed, and I will therefore kill this Sudra who is a wicked and injurer of all beings." (7-11).

The king again addressed the bull these words :—"O the son of Suravi, you are a quadruped, who then has cut off your other three legs ? There is none so much aggrieved like you in the kingdom of the Kauravas depending upon Sri Krishna. You are innocent and saintly. Therefore, do thou name him who has thus injured you and thereby brought slur upon the fame and reputation of the Pandavas. May good betide thee. Whoever offends the innocent ones, will be deprived of his pair of arms by me, even if he be a celestial and immortal. The noblest virtue of a king consists in protecting those who follow the paths of virtue and in punishing the evil workers who oppress the innocent ones without any cause." (12-16).

There upon Dharma began,—“Maharaj, such words of consolation to the distressed indeed become of you of the Pandava origin—the Pandavas, attracted by whose merits the Lord Sri Krishna served them even as orderlies etc.

But, O thou foremost of men, we do not know from whom these miseries to all beings are following. We have been perplexed with the diversity of arguments. The Atheists in their own ways would say that the miseries of the soul are caused by the soul itself. The Astrologers would hold that these are caused by the influence of stars and planets. The Mimangshakas would however hold that they are outcome of the Karima or action performed by the Jivas. And others still would hold that our miseries are caused by our own nature. Some of the learned theists say that sorrow and happiness proceed from God who is beyond our understanding and perception of senses. O Rajarshi, you are an intelligent man and you can well discern the truth in these sayings by dint of your clear understanding."

O Saunaka, the best of the twiceborns, the king Parikshit, on hearing those words of Dharma, pondered very particularly on the statement and became free from the mist of ignorance, and with darkness of ignorance removed from his mind, he then recognised the stranger as Dharma to be sure. Thus coming to know the real identity of the God of Piety, the king addressed him saying,—“O thou conversant with morals of religion, it is so described in the scriptures that even though particularly known the name of the assassin ought not to be told, for by telling his name that person also meets with an equal end with the assassin. You are expressing the name of your enemy in an indefinite way and thereby you are speaking out the truth in a sastric way, and this denotes that you are Virtue himself, roaming about in the guise of a bull. And again, everything in the world happens through *Maya* or the illusory will of God. Therefore, man cannot ascertain, by understanding and speech, as to who the real evil worker and who the injured are. And thou having known this art not

happiness. Parikshit of great might and world-wide celebrity sat on the throne of Hastinapura—the throne left to him by his grand-father the illustrious royal saint Yudhisthira who renounced the world. With the glory of the Kaurava kings, his predecessors, hallowing round him, Parikshit ruled the kingdom. The king Parikshit thus ruling the earth with even handed order and justice, you all were able to engage yourselves to the sacrifice.' (42-45).

CHAPTER XVIII.

IMPRECATION OF CURSE BY A BRAHMANA ON PARIKSHIT.

Suta said,—‘O foremost of the Brahmanas ! While in the womb of his mother, Parikshit was burned by the fiery weapon of Aswathwama. But due to the mercy of Lord Sri Krishna of wonderful actions, the life of Parikshit was resuscitated. He was whole heartedly devoted to God. For this reason even when the deadly Snake Takshaka came to him in consequence of the imprecation of a curse by a Brahmana,—Parikshit was not at all overwhelmed with the fear of losing his life. He became a disciple of Suk-deva, and became apprised of the knowledge about Sri Hari. As a result of the knowledge he forsook attachment to all worldly objects and renounced his body in the water of the Ganges. Those who enjoy always sweet discourses upon the holy glories of the Lord and ever meditate upon His lotus-like feet,—do not become confounded even at the time of their end. Thus, it was not at all unlikely that Parikshit, devoted entirely to God as he was, should be acting so justly. Even on the day and time of the Lord Sri Krishna’s leaving this earth, Kali, the source of all evils, has entered the earth. But

so long as the illustrious son of Abhimanyu (Parikshit) ruled as a paramount Sovereign over the earth, Kali's influence and power could not be fully developed and extended all throughout. (1-6).

The Emperor Parikshit always collected essence of things like a bee. He observed that in Kali-yuga all good deeds bore fruits even at the resolution therefor, but sinful actions would not produce the evil results till they are carried into practice. Indeed Kali was ever roaming about like a tiger in search of a pray, and for possessing on the inadvertent persons and inexperienced children, but that would not cause much injury. And for this reason although Kali was fostering evils, the King did not kill him. O best of Brahmanas! You were pleased to ask of me about the virtuous life of Parikshit, and thus I have narrated it while reciting the life and works of Sri Krishna of Supreme good to the world. What more should I say than this that all narrations describing His good graces and actions ought to be heard by persons desiring their own welfare." (7-10)

The Munis said,—“O Suta, live you for ever. You have been singing at length the holy praises on Sri Krishna, by hearing which the fear of death is being removed from our mind. We have engaged ourselves in performing the sacrifice of long duration, but we are not certain about its success, for, there are many obstacles to it. We have been discoloured due to smoke, and at this time you have made us refreshed by offering us delicious drink of honey of the lotus feet of Govinda. We care not for emancipation if we have the company of those who are devotees of Vishnu. What then to speak of wealth and kingdom as coveted by worldly minded men? God is the stay of pious persons. Those who are well acquainted with its fine taste cannot ever be fully satisfied with the praises of Him. Ever masters of yogas, Siva, Brahma etc are unable to attain

the end of His qualities—free from the influences of Prakriti and conducive to the Supreme good of the world. O thou learned one, you are the foremost of those devoted to the Service of God. Do thou, therefore, fully describe the most high and holy character of Hari, the stay of the devoted persons. We are very eager to hear it. Do you also relate to us fully the instructions that Suka imparted to Parikshit who was gifted with keen intellect and greatly devoted to God, the instructions by virtue of which Parikshit was able to attain shelter at the feet of the Lord, the source of final emancipation. The highly efficacious Bhagbata Purana was narrated to Parikshit. In it has been promulgated many wonderful systems of Yoga. It is full of the endless glories of Sri Krishna and as such it is highly pleasing to the devout. Do thou relate unto us this pleasant Purana." (11-17).

Suta replied,—“O the wonder! O the joy! We are born of a mixed caste, yet we are welcomed and honoured by the aged and wise Rishis. Therefore, our birth is blessed to-day. Those who are mortified by grief consequent upon their lowly birth, may get rid of their distress by entering into conversation with the wise ones. Hari, the Lord of the Universe, is the stay of all greatmen. He is all-powerful and eternal. People perceiving His great qualities manifested in things that is great, do describe Him to be eternal. People singing on His holy names have no more to fear for the miseries of a low birth. Lakshmi was previously sought by Siva and Brahma repeatedly but in vain. Though never desired by Narayana,—Kamala of her own accord clings to the dust of His feet. This, therefore, sufficiently proves that not to speak of His superiors there is none even equal to Him in qualities. Again, just think of this that the water which Brahma offered to Siva as a mark of respect hallowed Siva and the world. That water however

oozed out from the lotus feet of Vishnu. Thus it is, that none but He can be called God. Pious minded persons renounce their firm attachment towards body and its inseparable pride. Then they dedicate themselves to His feet, and attain to the last stage or order of Asrama known as *Paramahansa*, the best of all religious order or Asrama. By virtue of the Asrama they become bereft of any envy. I shall now narrate to you, as best as I can, the history of Parikshit, as desired by thee. Just as birds soar high in the sky so long as they can, so also the learned ones sing on the glories of Vishnu to the extent of their knowledge. (18-23).

One day the king Parikshit went out alone on a hunting excursion. He pursued a herd of deers. At this he became tired, hungry and thirsty. Thereupon he searched for water to allay his thirst. Proceeding on in search of water, he arrived at the hermitage of the renowned Muni Samika by name. On entering the hermitage, Parikshit saw that the Muni was in a sitting posture with his eyes closed and his whole body motionless. At that time the Muni Samika had dissociated his senses, their activities, mind and intellect from all worldly objects, and he became detached from outward consciousness, dream and sleep; and as such he then attained the best of all stages of yoga viz. *nirvikalpa samadhi*. Thus, the Muni Samika in that state of samadhi having known himself identical with One Absolute Brahman,—all actions of his sense-organs ceased. His body was covered by dishevelled knotty clusters of his hairs and a deer-skin. The king Parikshit was so very much thirsty that he felt his throat and tongue perched and dried up. He, therefore, requested the Muni for water. The Muni was then in a state of self-communion, as aforesaid, and as such, far less to speak of his hearing the king's request for water,—the Muni was not even conscious of the king

Parikshit's arrival at his hermitage. How could he then observe any hospitality? At this the king became possessed with passion and thought, "I have come to this hermitage as a guest. The Muni has not offered me any mat of Kusha-grass or any other seat, and not to speak of showing any due honour, he has not even welcomed me with any sweet words. Perhaps due to pride of his excellence in *Tapasya*, the Muni is slighting me." (24-28).

The king again thought, "Has the Muni really controlled his senses and is merged in his meditation with his eyes closed? Or he is slighting me thinking that it matters not if the inferior Kshatriya guest goes away unattended to?" Stricken, as he was, with hunger and thirst the king's hatred and anger increased, and the king intended to insult the Muni. With this intention, while leaving the hermitage, the king took up a dead snake with the end of his bow and placed it around the neck of the Muni. This being done, the king left for his city.

Samika Muni had a highly effulgent son Sringi by name, who was at that time a tender boy. Sringi was playing then with his comrades in another place. One of his comrades went to him and said—"The King Parikshit has greatly insulted your father by placing around his neck a dead serpent." At this the boy Sringi instantly flew into fury. His voice became choked with burning anger, and he said,—“See you the viciousness of the kings whose avowed duty consists in protecting their subject! If a servant maintained by his master injures his master,—then what is the difference between him and a plump crow or a door-keeping dog? The Kshatriyas, inferior as they are to the Brahmanas, have been appointed by the Brahmanas as warders. How can the Kshatriyas, therefore, dare take their meals at the same pot, stationed as they are at the gate? Lord Sri Krishna,—chastiser of the wicked, having departed, the king has transgressed

the respect of Brahmanas. Well, let me punish the king, and you behold my power" (29-35).

While speaking those words to his comrades, Sringi's eyes became blood-shot. On touching the water of Kausiki river, Sringi imprecated this curse "The black-ship of his family who slighted my sire's respect and insulted him,—at my words,—the great serpent Takshaka shall bite him within seven days from to-day."

Thereafter Sringi, the son of the Muni returned to the hermitage. On seeing the dead-serpent around his father's neck, Sringi became overwhelmed with sorrow and began to cry aloud. O Brahman! Maharshi Samika, a descendant of the family of Angira,—opened his eyes on hearing the loud cry of lamentation of his son. At first the Muni found a dead-serpent around his neck. He threw the snake off, and addressed Sringi thus,—“O my son! Why are you so crying? Has any one wronged you in any way?” Being thus queried by his father,—Sringi related everything from the beginning. (36-40).

The king Parikshit was not a person to be cursed. So that on hearing of the imprecation of the curse upon that Lord of men, the King Parikshit,—Maharshi Samika did not commend the action of his son. That great sage became very sorry and said,—“Alas! It is a matter of great regret. O my son, you have incurred a great sin to-day for the iniquity you have done. You have inflicted a severe punishment for rather a trifling offence. Your understanding is not yet ripe. You do not know that a king is the Lord of men and bears an appellation of Vishnu. You have erred in taking a king at par with an ordinary human being. Being protected by the unlimited prowess of the King, all people are enjoying blissful lives undauntedly. Without Narayana in the human form of a king, robbery and theft etc prevail among the people. So that there being none to protect them, the people meet with destruction soon just as the passing away of

a mass of clouds. The death of such a king has been caused to-day. Now robbers and thieves, having no one to fear from, will rob off and steal away the wealth and food-stuff of the people. Ah! We are the cause of this evil. The sins that has been incurred by causing this evil shall visit us, although we have had no concern there with. Alas! Now the people will kill one another. One will address uncharitable words to the other. Stealing of cattle, women and wealth among the people will multiply. The number of plunderers will be numberless. The virtue of the people, the four *Varnas* as per the Vedas, and the orders of the *Asramas* shall be deteriorated and degraded. The people will be running after wealth and desires alike apes and dogs. And degeneration and inter-mixture of races will result in consequence. (41-45).

“Raja-chakravarty (Sovereign, king of all other kings) Parikshit has been ruling his subject religiously. He is of great fame and he is ever devoted to God. He has performed horse-sacrifice. Being stricken with hunger and thirst he has been led to insult me, as he did. It has been therefore, improper on your part to imprecate the curse upon him.

“O Jagannath! God of gods! Thou art the soul of the universe. This my son of unripe understanding has done a great iniquity towards the innocent. It behoves thee, therefore, to forgive him. If, however, the king also imprecates a curse upon Sringi, then the sin thus incurred by Sringi may be atoned. But there is no such possibility. The king is ever so devoted to Great God. The devouts although back-bited, cheated, slighted or oppressed by others do not take any revenge even when they have the power so to do.”

That illustrious Samika Muni became very sorry and much repented on the misdeeds of his son Sringi. But he did not show the least anger or did not express any

ill-will against the king who insulted him. This is the way of the saints. They do not feel delighted in pleasures nor they lament in misery, for, they are not at all concerned with joy or sorrow knowing, as they do, these to be but attributes. (46-50).

CHAPTER XIX.

SUKA APPROACHES PARIKSHIT.

Suta, said,—(O Brahman ! Thereafter the king Parikshit, reflecting upon that act of iniquity perpetrated by him, became very anxious, and said within himself :—"Oh ! What a wicked soul I am ! I have insulted an innocent Rishi. What a great dunce I am ! I was unable to understand the effulgence of *Brahman* hidden in him. By so insulting the innocent Rishi of hidden effulgence, I have insulted the Almighty. So that on account of my said vicious act of slighting the Almighty great disaster will soon befall me. I now earnestly pray that the disaster may befall on me personally, and not upon my descendants. If I myself be punished, I may not commit any more so vicious an act. I have committed a great sin, and therefore may all my kingdom, army and unending wealth be burnt down to-day with the fire of the Brahman's anger. If that be done, my understanding may not turn so vicious again towards cows, Brahmanas and gods."

While the king Parikshit was thus meditating within himself, a disciple of the Samika Muni came to him and conveyed to him the news saying :—"O king, as imprecated by Samika Muni's son Sringi, Takshaka, as death disguised, shall bite you on the seventh day from to-day and kill you."

On so hearing, the king again thought thus :—"I was so long absorbed in enjoying all pleasures and luxuries of the world, And now my mind shall of course be dissociated from the world."

For this reason the king preferred the fiery Venom of Takshaka. Thereupon he dissociated his mind from both this and the next world and decided the serving of Sri Krishna's feet as the best that can be done. Then he resolved upon meeting with death by starvation, and with this end in view he repaired to the banks of the Ganges (*Suradhuni*) and sat there awaiting death. (1-5).

Who can there be who would not repair to the banks of the Ganges on knowing of his imminent death? The water of the Ganges, as sanctified by the dust of Vishnu's feet and mixed with *Tulashi*-leaves, purifies internally and externally all people of the world along with the gods presiding over all quarters. Who will not serve her of such a holy stream, even knowing of death at his doors? The descendant of Pandu, having so made up his mind to starve himself to death on the banks of the Ganges,—began to meditate upon the lotus feet of Sri Krishna with undivided attention. He renounced all earthly attachments and undertook the austere vow of asceticism.

Thereupon arrived at that place to see the king the high-souled sages such as Attri, Vasistha, Chyaban, Saradvan, Aristanemi, Bhrigu, Angira, Parasara, Viswamitra (the son of Gadhi), Parasurama, Utathya, Indrapramada, Subahu, Medhatithi, Debaka, Astisena, Bharadvaja, Gautama, Pippalada, Maitreya, Aurba, Karusha, Kumbhajoni, Dwaipayana, the divine sage Narada, Aruna and other great Devarshis, Maharshis and Rajarshis accompanied by their respective disciples. High-souled ascetics often sanctify the holy places by arriving there on the pretext of their going on pilgrimage. The king Parikshit, on seeing those great Rishis—each

one representing a *gotra* (a dynasty)—assembled there,—welcomed and duly worshipped them. When those Rishis were refreshed and were comfortably seated on their separate respective seats,—the king Parikshit sat before them with joined palms and with due obeisance to them, respectfully asked,—“O ye Munis! I have resolved upon starving myself to death. Now, please tell me if it is proper or not. All the assembled Munis approved the king's resolution. Thereupon the king Parikshit again began,—“Oh! Blessed am I amongst the kings as my conduct to-day has met with the approval of the assembled great Rishis, who do not honour the family of the kings committing vicious deeds even with washing of their feet. I am sinful and I was verily attached to worldly objects. I presume, Narayana, the greatest of all gods, has therefore assumed the shape of a Brahmana's curse on me, being mercifully inclined towards me. For, even though so very much attached to the world, on account of fear of the Brahmana's curse I may be inclined towards renunciation of earthly objects. O ye Brahmanas present and the holy Suradhuni (Ganges) before me,—be ye all informed that hence forward my mind has been entirely devoted to the feet of the great God Hari. Do ye all sing the glory of Hari. As imprecated by Sringi, the son of the Rishi Samika, let Takshaka bite me,—and I shall not be the least moved thereby. I bow down to all Brahmanas. Bless me ye all Brahmanas that my devotion may be increased again and again to the great and eternal Vishnu. May I have the association of saints devoted to the feet of Hari in all my subsequent births.”

The king Parikshit of tranquil mind made over the charge of the kingdom to his own son Janmejaya. Thus being relieved of his anxiety for the Kingdom, the King Parikshit, resolute in mind, sat on *Kusa* grass on the southern bank of the Ganges, with his face towards the

north. On seeing the King Parikshit thus resolved upon starving himself to death,—the gods in heaven being highly pleased showered celestial flowers upon the king, and blew bugles again and again. (6-18).

The Maharshis assembled there are ever bent upon doing good to the people and that being held by them to be their principle they could do so in this case, if they so willed it. The great saints, however, having sung the sanctifying glory of Sri Hari, began to praise the King Parikshit in high terms, saying,—“O thou best of Royal-sages ! It is not at all astonishing for you to be engaged in such an enterprise. You are born in the family of the Pandavas ever devoted to Sri Krishna. Desirous of remaining ever with the great God Sri Krishna, the Pandavas instantly renounced their Kingdom and the crown long enjoyed by them. O ye assembled great Munis ! Let us all remain here till this devout King Parikshit renounces his body and attains to that excellent state free from illusion (Maya) and sorrow ”

On hearing the impartial words of the illustrious sages, melodious like nectar, grave, true and significant,—the King Parikshit reverentially bowed down before them. Thereafter being desirous of hearing the praise of Sri Hari, the King spoke,—“Like the Vedas incarnate, of the regions of Truth, ye are assembled here from all directions with a view to favour me. For, the end in view of all your actions—either in this world or in the next—is to do good to others. Ye are never engaged in any action for yourselves. (19-23).

“O Brahmanas ! I now intend to ask of thee one thing. What are the holy actions that people should do as duty, more specially those persons who are on the verge of death ? Do ye discuss over the question and give me a fit reply.”

In answering the King's query some of the Rishis advocated religious rites, some of them professed the merits

of Vedic sacrifices, some spoke on meditation (*Tapasya*), some stood for yoga practices, and some sung on the virtues that can be attained by charity (*Dana*), to be holy actions. So that on points of merits of the diverse opinions there arose a quarrel among the assembled Rishis. Just at that time, roaming about of his own accord, there arrived Sukdeva—the illustrious son of Maharshi Vyasa. There were no signs of any particular *Asrama* (Brahmacharya, Girhastya, Vanaprastha, and Vikshuka) on his person. He was ever content of his constant *anubhuti* (direct experience) of the state of *Brahman*. He wore the garb of an *Abadhuta* (One having no worldly feeling or obligation, and as such looked upon by the people as an out-cast). He looked like a lunatic, and was therefore followed by a train of children encircling him with curiosity. The inner effulgence of his could not be perceived by outward look on him. He was only sixteen years old. He possessed tender hands, feet, thighs, arms, shoulders, cheeks and other limbs. He had a pair of beautiful and expanded eyes. His nose was high, and his ears were neither very long nor very short. His face was fascinating. The pair of his eye—brows was bewitching. His ears were very beautifully shaped, having three lines like a conch. The two knotty bones below his throat were covered with well-formed growth of flesh over them. His breast was broad and elevated. His navel was very deep and shaped like a whirlpool. His belly was beautifully decked with rows of hairs running downwards. He was naked, and his curly hairs fell all around his head. His arms were long and reached up to his knees. A lustre as that of Hari, the best of celestials, evinced out of his person. His complexion was green. The hallow of his full bloomed youth and sweet smile playing upon his coral lips were captivating to the hearts of women. Even though his effulgence was hidden and undiscernible, the great Rishis, cognisant of the marks on Suka's person, knew him to be

Suka and just on beholding him they stood up from their seats and welcomed him. The king Parikshit, a great devotee of Vishnu as he was, thereupon worshipped the coming guest by his head (i. e. bowed down). On seeing the king thus worshipping him,—the train of children and silly maidens that followed Sukadeva, taking him to be a lunatic, instantly dispersed. Then Sukadeva being thus worshipped comfortably sat on an excellent seat, (24-29).

Sukadeva shone more effulgent than any one there. Being surrounded by the Brahmarshis, Rajarshis and Devarshis present there, Sukadeva resplendently shone like the great Moon amidst the planets and stars. The king Parikshit greatly devoted to God, then approached Sukadeva and bowed before the latter by touching his head on the ground. The king bowed Sukadeva again and again and with folded palms and sweet words spoke to him, saying :—

“O Brahman, even being born as Kshatriyas,—inferior as they are,—we have become adorable to the pious, because by being a guest today you have sanctified us. O thou innocent one, the act of even remembering the great, as you are, makes holy the houses of the householders ; what then to speak of the virtue of seeing, touching and washing the feet of them ? O thou of great asceticism, as Asuras are done for by the mere look of Vishnu,—so also the great sins of the people disappear instantly in thy presence. (30-34).

The Lord Sri Krishna was ever fond of the Pandavas. I am born of the same race. Has then that great god Sri Krishna,—to please the children of his uncles,—done me today this friendly service ? As otherwise, how can I expect to see you come here to me just at the time of my death ? You have attained perfection ; and your movements are unknowable. Through the grace of the merciful Lord, thou art come to me. And thy presence actuates

me to enquire of thee what I am really anxious about in my mind to know. Thou art the greatest of the yogins. It is, therefore, that I solicit thee to advise me about the actions, that emancipates those who are on the point of death and specially those who are anxious to acquire salvation. What should be their duties? O my master, what should the people hear, recite mentally perform, remember and worship? What, again, the people should not do? Do thou, O lord advise me about these O Brahman! Thy sight is a rarity. I do know it for certain that thy stay in the houses of the householders does not ever cover more time than what is required usually to milk a cow."

Suta said,—“Having been thus solicited with worth, words by the king Parikshit, Sukdeva, the illustrious son of the divine-sage Vyasa, possessing knowledge of all that is called religion,—began.”

The end of Book I.

SRIMAD-BHAGBATAM



BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE WAY OF FIXING THE MIND UPON THE DIVINE PERSON.

Suka said, "O king, thy query is about the foremost of all those whose names are worthy of being heard and recited and those who should be worshipped and meditated upon. This thy question is in itself the cause of emancipation and as such it is highly esteemed even by the liberated ones. O King there are thousand and one things that are worthy of being heard by the householders who are generally ignorant of the knowledge of the self (Soul). They are fast attached to worldliness and during their household works they harm creatures in five common different ways (known as '*Pancha suna*' ; *Pancha* means five and *suna* means instrument of destruction). They do not discuss about *atma-tattva* i. e. knowledge of the self or nature of the *Jivasoul*. During the whole span of their life, they pass the nights in sleep and sexual pleasures, and the days they spend in attempts at earning money and maintaining their families. They should know for certain, from the examples of their departed or long ago deceased ancestors that body, wife, children and the kinsmen etc though objects of affection are all transitory. Even yet they are so fastly attached to these and would not seriously see to what they always see. O thou best of the descendants of Bharata, seekers

of salvation should for this reason hear and recite the holy name of the Lord Sri Hari, the Great God. (1-5).

The *samman bhavam* of the life of a man, mortal as he is, consists in meditating upon Hari in right earnest, or upon the chosen image of the Lord according to the school of *sādhana* (religious course of discipline undergone) the man belongs to. The *sādhaka* should discourse on the nature of the jiva-soul and practise the eight systems of Yoga. The real aim of man's life is to meditate upon God at least at the end of his life. O King, the Munis who do not observe the prescription or restriction of the Sastras (Religious Scriptures) and also the Munis who remain ever in communion (Samadhi state) with attributeless Brahman,—even they do express joy to hear the recitation of the wonderful glories of the Lord Sri Hari. The Purana that I would recite unto thee is named Bhagbata. This Purana is equal in merit to all the Vedas taken together. At the commencement of the Dvāpara-yuga, I heard this Purana from my father Vyasa. It is true that my mind is ever in communion with attributeless Brahman, and yet my mind was diverted to the narration of the Purana by my father as it contains the holy glories and wonderful deeds of the Lord of the Universe. O thou Royal-sage, it was for this reason that I heard the Purana wholly. Thou art a devotee of the Lord Vishnu and I will therefore recite the most holy Bhagbat-Purana to thee. Devotedly hearing of the recitation of this Purana gives birth to desireless devotion to Sri Krishna. (6-10).

O King, this recitation of the sacred names and glorious deeds of Sri Hari is capable of emancipating even those persons who are full of desires, those persons who are indifferent to worldly objects and pleasures derivable from their enjoyments, and also those who are Yogins practising withdrawal of their senses from external objects. That is to say, the merit of this Bhagbat Purana is capable

of granting the desired end to all alike. A man attached to the worldly affairs and living many years should deem his long life as spent in vain if he had not thought even for a short time at least (during his long life) that he had not been spending his time towards any useful purpose. On the other hand, if such a repentance at all arise in the mind of a man living only a short span of life, then that repentance, even though of a momentary nature, is conducive of virtue, for, that repentance incite the man to do pious deeds with a view to attain welfare of his soul at the end of the life. O Maharaj, in days long back, there was a king Khattanga by name. That king perceived that there was only a short time before the end of his life, and thereupon he renounced everything in a moment and took resort to the feet of Sri Hari. O thou descendant of Kuru, there are but seven days before the end of your life. Therefore, it behoves thee to perform even within this short time as many pious deeds as possible to lead you to a better state in the next life. The end approaching, a man should give up all fear for death and should sever all worldly bonds of attachment by the weapon of *Vairagya* (indifference). (11-15).

Thereafter, the person—calm in mind—should leave his home and bath in holy waters. Thus bathed in holy waters, he should prepare a comfortable seat in a lonely place—according to the instruction of Sastras—and seated thereon he should meditate upon the sacred *OM*, composed of three letters and beginning with the first letter of the vowel series of the Sanskrit alphabet. While thus meditating, he should try to the best of his power to control his mind by regulating his breath. Having attained mastery over his mind, he should guide the mind by the dictates of *Buddhi* (the intellect that unerringly leads to Truth). With the mind guided by such unerring *Buddhi* he should

then dissociate his sense-organs (eyes etc.) from worldly objects. The mind, hitherto attached to worldly objects through the sense-organs, should now be turned entirely towards divine subjects. Thus controlled mind should then be concentrated upon the symbolic image of God—the image of the chosen deity with all its limbs and in its entirety. At the stage of consummation of this concentration, the mind shall in due course be absolutely turned away from all objects and even any conception of any object shall no more be. This state of experience of the mind is known as *Samadhi*, when there shall not be any anxiety or fear or any sensation whatsoever. So that at this stage of concentration of the mind nothing whatsoever remains to be done or thought of doing. This serene and sublime state of the mind in unperturbed peace and rest is known as the *Parama Pada* (the Supreme State of Existence) of the Lord Vishnu. If at all such a concentration of the mind is broken and the mind comes down to a lower plane being disturbed by the influence of *Rajas* and *Tamas*,—then patient persons determined to pursue the course of concentration will be able to check that influence of *Rajas* and *Tamas* by constant efforts in keeping the mind engaged in meditation. It is only by such meditation that the *Sadhaka* can successfully cope with and ward off the evil influence of *Rajas* and *Tamas*. Being fully practised in meditation, the *Sadhaka* attains perfection in Bhakti-yoga in a short time." (16-21).

At this stage the King asked—"Brahman, what is the prescribed way of meditation? What one should meditate upon? In what way the meditation should be practised with a view to purify the mind in the shortest time possible?"

Sukdeva replied the king,—“O King, one should first of all become practised in *Asana* (the different postures of sitting), *Pranayama* (regulating the breath), dissociating

the mind from all worldly attachment and in controlling the senses. Thereafter with the help of Buddhi, the entire and undivided attention of the mind should be concentrated on the symbol (image etc) of the Lord. The Lord is immeasurable indeed in dimension, and the symbol of the Lord merely helps the mind to conceive of such a grand form. All actions of the Past, Future and Present time may be conceived of manifested in that symbolic form of the Lord. The symbol is consisting of seven fundamental elements viz. *Khiti*, *Āp*, *Teza*, *Bayu*, *Ākasa*, the egoistic senses and the Mahat-tattwa. The Great Soul as conceived of manifested in that symbolic form is the object of meditation. (22-25).

Under the sole of the feet of the Great God—the Creator of the Universe—of universe-form and having thousand heads, is the *Patala* (the region under the Earth), towards the front and hind part of His feet are the *Rasatalas*, the two ankles are the *Mahatalas*, the two legs are *Talatalas*, the two thighs are *Sutalas*, the upper and lower part of the thigh are *Bitala* and *Atala*, the *Mahitala* is His hip and His navel is the Sky. His breast is the *Sva-loka* (the abode of the celestials) His neck is *Maharloka*, His face is the *Janaloka*, His forehead is the *Tapaloka* and His heads are *Satyà-lokas*. Indra, the king of gods, and the celestials are His arms. All quarters are His ear-holes. The sound is His organ of hearing. The pair of Aswinis are His nostrils. The smell is His organ of smelling. The flaming fire is His eye-balls. The Sun is His organ of vision. The night and day are His eye-lids, Brahma is His eye-brow. The water is His palate. The taste is His tongue. The Vedas are his temple (Crown). The God of Death (Yama) is His rows of teeth. The children and the other objects of affection are His teeth. *Maya* (the illusion) enchanting the people is His smile, and numberless other creations are but His looks. Play is His upper-lip and avarice is His lower-lip. Virtue is

His breast and Vice (Sin) is His back, Prajapati (the Great Patriarch) is His organ of generation. Mittra and Varuna are His pair of horns. The oceans represent His belly and the mountains are His bones. (26-32).

O King, the rivers represent the cavity of navel of that Great Purusha of universe-form. The trees and plants are the hairs of His body. The Wind of irresistible might is His gait (movement) and the destruction of the Creatures is His play. O thou foremost of the Kauravas, the clouds are the hairs on the head of the Great God. The evening is His cloth. The Nature is His heart. The Moon is His mind, the fountain-head of the different aspects of conscience. O King, the learned ones regard all sciences as constituting the essence of His greatness. The Rudra is His sense of pride. The horse, mule, camel and elephants are His nails, and the other beasts and animals are His hip. The feathery-race represent His artistic skill. The Swayambhuva Manu is His intellect. The men are His stay. The Gandharvas, Apsaras, Vidyadharas and Charanas are His recollections of the notes (Sharaja etc.) in Music. The Asura-armies represent His might. The Brahmanas are His mouth, the Kshatriyas are His hands, the Vaisyas are His thighs and the dark-complexioned Sudras are His feet. He is encircled by the deities such as Vasus and the Rudras.

Oblations of clarified butter as in the sacrifices are His cherished actions. Maharaj, I have related to you the manifestations of the limbs of that Grand Person. Person aiming at emancipation attempts at knowing these manifestations of His corporeal parts, which constitute everything in the Universe, and there is nothing else than that. O King, just as a Jiva (individual) fancies in dreams various bodies and feels everything through the diverse senses of those bodies; similarly the Great Soul (identical with the Jiva-soul) perceives everything pervading through the intellect of all individuals. So the Yogins

engage their mind in meditating upon and worshipping the Great Purusha, the source of Real Truth and Joy and they are not attached to anything else, the attachment that causes downfall." (33-39).

CHAPTER II

THE EVOLUTION IN THE LIFE OF A YOGIN

Suka said,—“Maharaj, in time long back, at the time of dissolution of the Universe, Brahma had forgotten all about creation in the previous Cycle. Thereupon having pleased Hari, by Virtue of Dharana (a stage in the yoga system), Comprehension and through Hari's grace Brahma regained his lost memory. Thus having regained his lost memory and with the help of his clear understanding and precision Brahma again created this universe just in the same way as it was done before. He only is the fit person to practise Dharana in his pure mind in whom has arisen vairagya (indifference) as a result of desireless worship. This is why fruits of actions have been treated as derogatory towards attaining vairagya. Words or Sound is the emblem of Brahman. The Vedas are full of such words or Sound-emblem of Brahman. The course of the Vedas is such that the intellect of the *Sadhaka* (devotee) is engaged in and overwhelmed with thoughts about the fictitious names such as *Swarga* etc as coined in the Vedas. But, just as an individual hankering after the worldly pleasures would lie down and merely visualise objects of pleasures in dreams without actually enjoying the pleasures similarly he rambles in the heaven of illusory creation but does not obtain the real bliss. Therefore, the learned persons should not attempt at enjoying pleasures in name only. The wise would, therefore, resort to objects of

enjoyment only to an extent such as would be required to sustain the body, and even then they would not be ever attached to them, for this reason that they know it for certain that those objects cannot give real happiness or bliss. Then again, if sustaining the body can be done otherwise, the wise would deem the labour for getting the objects not worth the while and they would refrain from enjoyment of worldly pleasures. There is the earth to lie down upon and what use is of a bed then? There being the pair of arms what is the use of a pillow? The folded palms existing, where is the necessity of taking troubles for procuring different sorts of utensils for eating and drinking from? The quarters and bark of trees existing, what is the necessity of clothes? Are there not barks lying on the way? The trees bear fruits for the enjoyment of others; therefore, do they not give fruits if prayed for? Have the rivers been dried up? Have the caves of mountains been blocked by any one? Does not Hari—the Great God—protect His devotees any longer? Then why do the wise solicit the rich who are almost blinded with the pride of their wealth? (1-5).

Hari is of His own accord manifest in our hearts. He is the Soul and therefore most beloved. He is the embodiment of Truth, and is not vain like the other soul-less objects. He is fully equipped with all the attributes of being worshipped. He is endless. Therefore an individual (jiva) should worship Him being merged in the attempt at fully comprehending Him. Worshipping Him shall terminate *Avidya* (illusory ignorance) which is the source of the Universe. The Jivas of the world are as fallen in Baitarini (the river of that name having boiling water running around the Hell) suffering innumerable miseries in consequence of their imprudent actions. Beholding such sufferings of the others, who else but irrational and beastly in nature would leave meditating upon Hari to kill time being engaged in despicable worldly thoughts? Some of the

people would meditate through *Dharana* (Comprehension) upon the *Purusha* (Being) measuring a *pradesha* (the measure of a space as between the two fingers *Tarjani* and *Angustha* and living in the innermost recesses of the hearts within their bodies. He has four hands gracefully bearing *Sankha* (Conchshell), *Chakra* (a weapon of the shape of a disc, like that of a Sawing machine, revolving on one end of an axle the other end being held in hand ; the weapon used only by Sir Krishna) *Gada* (a mace) and *Padma* (a lotus flower). His is a smiling face and delighted countenance, and His eyes are expansive resembling the petals of lotus or *palasa* (a flower of that name). His cloth is coloured yellow like the filament of *Kadamba* flowers. He is wearing golden *Angada* (a sort of ornament worn on the upper arms) studded with shining precious stones. His crown and *Kundalas* (ornaments used on the ears such as ear-rings) are set with sparkling jewells of rare-value. The pair of His lotus-feet are always meditated upon by yogins in the innermost recesses of their respective hearts. His heart is stamped upon with the image of Sri (Lakshmi ; that is to say, His heart is the abode of Lakshmi, His consort), and on His shoulders shines the *Kaustava* gem. The garland of forest flowers of ever unfaded beauty is gracefully hanging down His neck, and His other limbs are beautifully adorned with price-less ornaments such as *Mekhala* (an ornament of three chains worn round the loins), rings, *Nupuras* (an ornament worn round the feet and remarkable for the jingling sounds produced on walking or dancing) and *Kankanas* (bracelets). His head and face look charming being gracefully adorned with fine, clear, curly and black hair and fascinating smile playing over His coral lips. And the artistic movements of his brows produced as a result of liberal and sportive smile are expressive of His bountiful favours. Therefore one should remain wholly engaged in meditation upon the Great God so long as the mind remains tranquil and fixed by *Dharana* (6-12).

The *Sadhaka* (devotee) should meditate, through comprehension, upon each of the limbs (from toe to temple) of *Gadadhara* (Weilder of the mace ; a name of Vishnu the Lord of the Universe). The devotee should meditate upon commencing one by one from such of the lower limbs (feet, heels and ankels etc) as are generally kept open to one's gaze, and proceed gradually on towards the higher and important parts of the body. Continued meditation in the aforesaid manner will make the mind pure and tranquil. So long as devotion is not produced to the Greatest of the Great Brahma and the other celestials and the Manifestor and Lord of the Universe, till the time the devotee should go on along with his unavoidable daily duties meditating upon the gross corporeal manifestation of that Great Purusha. O King, thus ultimately when the yogin wishes to renounce his body then, without thinking of the favourable time and holy place, seated calmly on a comfortable seat and controlling his consciousness by the will-force of his disciplined mind, he should go on practising *pranayama* (regulation of the vital air ; breath). He should control his mind by his clear buddhi (intellect). The buddhi, however, should be merged in the vital Spirit or power that perceives the *Atman*, thereafter that vital Spirit should be merged in the Pure Soul *Visuddha Atman* and at long last the Pure Jiva Soul (*Jivatma*) should be merged in *Paramatma* (the Great Soul)—when only will be realised that everlasting peace and serene beatitude and the yogin will completely desist from all actions (*Karmas*) whatsoever. (13-16).

The yogin having realised the aforesaid stage of perfection knowing himself identical with or as an emanation of Brahman even all powerful Time which lords it over all gods will have no influence upon his (the yogin's) soul ; what to speak of the influence upon that soul by those gods influenced as they are by the Time ? Again, even the gods having no power or influence upon that

Soul, what can then do the creatures who are dependent upon the gods? And in that state of the Soul the components of the Universe viz the three elementary qualities Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas too will cease to act upon, and also Prakriti (Nature), Ahamkara-tattwa (the Egoism) and Mahat-tattwa (Intellect etc) that are causes of creation cannot however create him again. That yogin then do not recognise anything else as *atman* beyond his own soul and rejects everything saying 'It is not the *atman*'. It is not the *atman*' ('*neti neti*'). He consigns the ego etc to the gross body etc and for all moments meditate in his mind, upon the lotus-feet of the Lord Sri Vishnu. No attachment for anything else remains in him any longer. Therefore that lotus-feet of Vishnu is the best and ultimate resort.

When the yogin can realise the whole Universe as manifestation of Brahman, his *Vishaya Vashana* (worldly desires) ceases automatically, and he becomes free from desires. Thereafter placing the heel of his foot obstructing the passage of rectum, he will be relieved from distress, and get the vital air gradually up through Six *chakras* (centres) viz navel etc. In this process, the yogin will first of all pass the vital air from the *Manipur chakra* in the navel to *Anahata chakra* in the heart; then to *Visuddha chakra* below the color-bones: thus having fully controlled his senses, the yogin should gradually pass on the vital air higher up to the palate; and then having closed the seven passages viz, two ears, two eyes, two nostrils and mouth, the vital air should be passed on from the palate to *Ajna chakra* at the mid point between the two eye-brows. If at this stage the yogin be absolutely without any desire, then the vital air will be there for only half a moment and having realised *Parama Brahma* (Super Soul) it will be passed on up to the *Brahmarandhra* (cerebrum; a cell or cavity at the top of the head). At the next moment the vital air will

break through the Brahmarandhra and leave the body and the senses, (17-20).

But, O King, if you wish to realise *Brahmapada* the excellent region which is the abode of those accomplished in piety the ethereal region soared up by birds, the eight *Siddhis* or wealth (*Anima* etc) or to lord over the Universe as composed of all qualities, then the vital air, while leaving the body, should be accompanied by the senses and the mind. The yogins, who are practised in worshipping devoted to the service of God, practised in the eight yoga systems, and who have attained the samadhi state, have subtle forms in the wind. Therefore they can traverse through everywhere within and without the three worlds. The Karma-yogins cannot attain to that excellent state as fruits of their *Karmas* (actions). The Karma-yogins, who perform sacrifices, are first of all led, after giving up of their body, through the ethereal course accompanied by the self-luminous *Susumna* (a very prominent tubular organ termed by that name in the Yoga system) to the God of Fire. O King, there they are cleared of all sins. Then they rise up still to the bright *Sishumara* region of Hari and attain to the different planes of that bright region beginning with *Aditya* etc and ending with *Dhruva*. Thereupon proceeding on through that *Vishnu-chakra* (region of Vishnu) which is known as the navel of the Universe, —and assuming a bright form alone arrives at the *Maharloka* which is the abode of those who realised Brahman and are worshipped by all. Bhrigu and the other learned ones are living there for a term of a *Kalpa* (a period of time extending over 4,320,000,000 solar years.) (21-25)

Thereafter when the Kalpa comes to an end, and the whole universe is burnt by the fire emanated from the mouth of that Eternal Purusha (God), then the *Maharloka* also becomes heated by that fire and the Munis thereupon proceed on to the next higher region of *Brahmapada* and

live there for two *Parardhas* (a great extent of time). There are innumerable vehicles used by the gods. Beyond tension of feeling, there is no grief, no decrepitude, no death, no physical distress and no fear or other miseries. From that region it is seen that Jivas are suffering the miseries of births and deaths on account of their not knowing the meditation upon the Great God.

As a result of that sight and out of compassion for those unfortunates the Munis feel mental distress, and this is their only distress there. Thereupon the Munis assume universe forms, but they are then bereft of the consequential fear. Thereafter they assume the form of water and after that the fiery form, and while maintaining the same shining brilliance they then get the airy form. After that they attain the form of ether resembling the form of *Paramatman*. Thereafter the Yogins smell through the organ of smelling, taste by the tongue, perceive forms by the eyes, feel touch by the skin, hear by the ears and perform actions by the respective organs. Thereafter they acquire the gross forms where the senses work, and experience mental and divine egoes. In this way attaining *Mahat-tattwa* also they are led to *Prakriti* (Nature) where the influence of the elements merge in, (26-30)

Thus being manifested as *Ananda* (Joy) their sense of distinction disappears, and therefore they then attain to the changeless eternal *atman* full of all joys, peace and bliss. O King, the Muni acquiring this divine realisation has not to return to this world any more. O King, there are the two eternal ways (Margas) viz. direct emancipation and evolutionary emancipation, described as above in the Vedas, of which you have enquired of me. Formerly being pleased with the worship of Brahma, the Lord Vasudeva recounted to him about those two ways (Margas) of emancipation. For men in this world there is no other thing more conducive to their welfare, for out of this grows devotion to the Lord Vasudeva. The means of

acquiring devotion to Hari was realised by the Great Brahma through intelligently perusing the Vedas thrice with undivided attention. That God is ever manifested in all hearts as the *seer* (Drasta) can be easily comprehended by the power of understanding and other visible things with the help of which we can imagine.

Therefore, O King, persons wishing welfare should always and every where hear, recite and recollect wholeheartedly the glories of Sri Hari. Persons who take by the ear the elixir of discourses on the Great God who is manifested as the soul of the Saints, become purified in thought and mind even though they may be originally vicious, and in due course they approach the lotus-feet of Vishnu." (31-37)

CHAPTER III

THE MEANS TO REALISE THE DESIRED END

Suk-deva said, "O King, you have asked me about the duties of the great men, specially those who are about to expire. I now relate to you in detail the topic as embodied in the Sastra (Religious Text). Maharaj, people worship different deities for realising different desires. He who wishes to acquire *Brahma tesa* (the energy emanating from Brahma) should worship the Great Brahma the Lord of the Vedas; similarly he who desires to acquire power of the sense-organs should worship Indra, the king of the gods. He who craves for offspring should worship *Daksha* and other *Prajapatis* (Patriarchs). He who desires good fortune should worship the Goddess Durga. He who wishes to acquire energy should worship *Agni* (the God of Fire). He who prays for wealth should worship the *Vasus* (the vasus are eight in number.) He

who wishes to acquire might and prowess should worship *Aditi* (the mother of the gods, Adityas). He who desires to attain Heaven should worship the twelve Adityas. He who desires a kingdom should worship the Viswa-devas. He who wishes for agricultural lands (or liberty of his subjects) should worship the Saddhyas. He who desires long life should worship the Aswinis. He who wishes to get nutrition should worship the Earth. He who wishes to ward off the dangers of losing their position should worship *Antariksha* (the space between Heaven and Earth.) He who desires beauty should worship the Gandharvas. He who wishes to get beautiful damsels should worship Apsaras (Urvasi etc.) He who wishes to lord over all should worship *Paramatma* (the Super-Soul or the Supreme Spirit). He who desires for fame should worship Vishnu named as *Jajna* (Sacrifice, ie. the Lord of sacrifice). He who wishes to hoard monies should worship Varuna. He who wishes to be learned should worship Girisha. He who craves for conjugal love should worship Uma. He who wishes to acquire virtue should worship Narayana.

He who desires increase of progeny should worship the Pitris (the manes.) He who desires to ward off the obstacles should worship the Yakshas. He who desires to increase strength should worship the gods. He who desires service under kings should worship the Manus. He who desires destruction of his enemies should worship Nirritis (Rakshasas). He who desires enjoyment should worship Soma, and he who desires Vairagya (indifference towards everything in this world but God) should worship the *Parama Purusha* (the best of all Beings) Sri Vishnu. (1-9).

But, at the same time, he who has no desire or he who desires all the abovenamed objects and also other objects, or he who is high-minded and seeks salvation, all of them should also worship that *Parama Purusha* Sri

Vishnu with singular devotion. Those persons who worship Indra' and other gods as aforesaid may attain *summum bonum* of their lives, if through association with devotees of the Lord unflinching devotion to God be developed in them; or else all such worship of Indra and other gods prove fruitless toils. Maharaj. discourses on Hari brings knowledge which destroys the rolling waves of *Gunas* (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas) as manifested by the passions Raga etc., so that the soul enjoys bliss, and indifference or repugnance towards the worldly objects is produced. For this reason it is called straight way to salvation or Bhakti-yoga. Therefore it is no wonder that he will feel most earnestly eager to hear discourses on Hari, the Lord of the universe, who has not been able to attain full complacence on hearing other discourses. (10-12)

The Saunaka Muni then asked Suta.—“O thou learned one, Suta, having heard all those things from Suk-deva the son of Vyasa, what else more the best of the Bharata-race, the King Parikshit, questioned about? We are very eager to hear it, and it behoveth the to relate unto us all about that. In that assembly of pious persons there must have been raised various other discourses relating to the main discourse on Hari, which is the ultimate of all. That *Maharatha* (*Rathis* are those warriors who fight from a car driven by horses, and *Maharatha* means Great amongst such *Rathis*) the son of the Pandavas, the king Parikshit too was a great devotee of God. Worshipping Hari was the play of his childhood. Divine Suka, the illustrious son of Vyasa too was a devotee of the Lord Sri Krishna. Therefore in that assembly of devotees like them must have taken place a noble discourse on the glories of God, O Suta, with the rising and setting of the sun, the span of the lives of men passes away in vain Only his life is fruitful who spends his time in singing on the glories of Sri Hari. Are not the trees animate?

and do not the bellows breathe? Do not the animals living in localities eat and have sexual intercourse? But the person who has not even heard in his ears the name of Sri Hari,—is to be treated as a beast. There is no distinction between such a person and a dog, a village swine, a camel or an ass. (13-19).

A person who has never heard the discourses on Sri Hari, his ears may be regarded as mere holes. O Suta the tongue of the person who has never sung on the glories of Sri Hari may be regarded as contemptible as that of the tongue of a frog. A head even though furnished with a crown or a silk turban, but never bending down to the lotus like feet of *Mukunda* (the Lord Vishnu) may be regarded as nothing but an useless burden to the body. The hands although adorned with golden bracelets but that have never been used to offer flowers worshipfully to the lotus feet of Sri Hari may be regarded as useless as the hands of a dead person. The eyes that have never seen the beauty of Sri Hari may be regarded as vain beautiful marks of eyes on the plumes of a peacock. The feet that have not walked to the places hallowed by the association of the Lord Sri Hari may be regarded as trunks of trees. The persons who have never taken the dust of the feet of devotees of the Lord, though physically living, are to be regarded as useless as corpses. And that who has not enjoyed the smell of the *Tulasi* leaves placed at Sri Hari's feet, although breathing, should be regarded as dead. The heart of the person may be regarded as hard as stone, who does not feel pricked with conscience and overwhelmed with *Bhakti* (devotion) on hearing Sri Hari's name sung, and even though moved in heart if his eyes do not shed tears and the hairs of his body do not stand erect with feeling of reverence and awe. O Suta, thou art the foremost of the Lord's devotees. We are at one with what you have been saying. Therefore, do thou relate to us what Vyasa's son Suk-deva, well-versed in the knowledge

of the soul, said unto the king on being duly solicited by the latter. (20-25).

CHAPTER IV.

INVOCATION BY SUKDEVA.

Suta Said,—Brahman, on hearing Sukdeva's instructions purporting to the knowledge of the soul, the King Parikshit, the son of Uttara, decided that there is none else to worship than Krishna. Thereupon he concentrated his mind on Sri Krishna. The affections which Parikshit hitherto had so fixed on his body, wife, son, palace, elephants and other animals, wealth and friends were then renounced by him. And on perceiving his end drawing near, he also renounced all actions relating to religion profit and desire, and he became very deeply attached to the Lord Vasudeva. You have asked me on the very same subject which Parikshit—having his eagerness aroused for hearing of the power of Krishna—asked Sukdeva saying, "Brahman, thou art omniscient. Therefore, on hearing thy discourses on Hari, my ignorance is being fully dispelled. (1-5).

"The way in which God by His own will (*Maya*) creates, protects and destroys the universe, cannot be fully comprehended even by kings. Brahman, do thou relate to me, how and on assuming what powers that eternally mighty Being Himself acts as though in play and also manifests Himself as many and causes all to act as in play. O Yogin, the objects of actions, of the wonder-working Lord are inescapable even by the learned ones. Does that One Absolute God act at a time in the shape of *Purusha* (Male Being), assuming the attributes of *Prakriti* or does He do that gradually manifesting Himself as the

Great Patriarch (*Brahma*) etc. I do now pray to be told all these by you. I have doubts on all these subjects, and do thee, therefore, relate them fully unto me. Thou art initiated in *Savda-Brahma* (word emblem of Brahman) through inference, and in *Para-Brahma* (Great Soul or Perfect Spirit) through *anubhava* (experience)" (6-10)

Suta Said,—Brahman, thus being questioned by the King Parikshit on discourses about Sri Hari,—Sukdeva remembering Hrishiksha (a name of the Lord Vishnu) in his mind, thus began to relate :—

"I do bow (salute) unto that Best of Male Beings (*Parama Purusha*) who even in a playful way assimilate within Himself the three kinds of fundamental attributes viz *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, wherefrom is produced the Universe with all its material elements. His greatness knows no bounds. He is the best of all. He abides in the hearts of all *Jivas*, and His course of action is imperceptible.

"I do again bow unto him, who is the redeemer of distresses of the pious and represser or destroyer of the sinners. He is an emanation of *Sattwa*, and it is He who confers knowledge of the self as solicited by saints settled in *Paramahansa* stage or *asrama* (the highest stage of a yogi characterised by the absolute renunciation of all earthly enjoyments).

"I do bow unto Him again and over again, who is the maintainer of the devotees. The sham yogis are not capable of attaining Him. He is the One Absolute Possessor of the best of wealth and He enjoys within Himself the Beatitude of *Brahman* which is identical with His own Real Self.

"My repeated salutations are unto Him, singing on whose names, whose holy remembrance, rendering service to whom, hearing of whose glories, and worshipping whom the people are always purified of their sins, and on hearing whose auspicious fame people acquire virtue. (11-15).

"I do bow down again and again unto Him of holy

merits (*Puṇyasloka*) on serving whose lotus-feet conscientious people become free from all fears of this earth and also of the life beyond and with ease attain to the state of *Brahman*.

"I do salute repeatedly unto Him of pure fame unto whom only ascetics, yogins, charitable persons, persons of fame and reputation, persons conversant with *mantras* (sacred syllables or formulae) and those practised on good deeds offer their respective *Sadhana*s (Tapasyas) to acquire supreme welfare.

"Kirata, Huna, Andhra, Pulinda, Pukkasa, Abhira, Sumbha, Jabana, Khash and other races following iniquitous ways attain purity of soul by taking refuge under the great devotees of the Lord ; and I do therefore bow down unto that Lord of the Universe (Vishnu)."

"May that *Paramatma* (Great Soul) be propitious unto me ; the Lord who in the form of His Real Self is worshipped by the steady persons, who is the Lord Paramount, who Himself is the Vedas, who is Virtue incarnate, who is ever-meditated upon, and whose image is gazed upon by His devotees with open heart and reverential awe.

"May He be graciously pleased unto me ; who is the Lord of Lakshmi (the goddess of riches), who is the Lord of sacrifice, who is the Lord of creation, who is the Lord of intellect, who is the Lord of the world, who is the Lord of the Earth, and who is the Lord and stay of the devotees of the Andhaka and Brishni families. \ (16-20).

"May the Lord Mukunda be propitious towards me,—the Lord meditation on whose feet in Samadhi State purifies *Buddhi* (intellect), and the wise then attain *Atma-tattva* (Knowledge of the Self ; spiritual mysteries) ; the Lord who is identified as *Saguna* (with attributes) and *Nirguna* (attributeless) according to the *Buddhi* (understanding) of the respective *Pandits* (learned followers of different schools of thought).

"May that supreme Instructor (God) be pleased unto

me ; the Lord who in the beginning of the *Kalpa* (eye) roused in the heart of *Brahma* (the Creator) recollection regarding creation ; the Lord urged upon by whom *Sarasvati* (the goddess of learning) with her symbolie marks of different branches of learning issued out from the mouth of that *Lotus-origin* (*Brahma* who is known to have issued out of the lotus which again issued from the navel of the Lord Sri Hari).

“May that Lord of the Universe graee all that I say who having created with great elements this mansion (body) manifested by the corporeal frame has been lying in it in a subtle form ; and who Himself being the manifestor of the sixteen qualities viz. the eleven sense-organs and five great physical elements has again been bearing their influence.

“I do also bow down unto the illustrious Vyasa-deva, an emanation of the Lord Vasudeva, from whose lotus-mouth the devotees drank the wine of knowledge.”

Thereafter the great Suk-deva addressed the king Parikshit saying,—“O king, formerly Narada had enquired of *Brahma*, who had contained in him the Vedas, about this knowledge. And *Brahma* had told him exactly as he himself was told by Lord Sri Hari. (21-25).

CHAPTER V.

THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE.

The Divine-sage Narada addressed *Brahma* with due respect in these words :—“O God of gods ! O thou Creator of the Universe ! O thou first of all Beings ! I do bow down unto thee. Do thou be pleased to impart to me instructions which will enable me to comprehend *atma-tattwa* (the knowledge revealing the mysteries of the Soul). O my Lord ! Do thou precisely relate in full unto me the

manner of manifestation of the Universe ; its stay upon and controller of ; its creator and whom it merges in ; and also whom it emanates from Thou knoweth all these, because thou art the Lord of the Past, the Future and the Present. It follows therefore that this Universe is so well known to thee as an apple in the palm of one's hand is supposed to be. Who bestowed the special knowledge (*Bijnana*) unto thee ? Who art thy stay ? Whom art thou serving under ? What is thy real identity ? I know, thou under thy own sway, and under thy own *Maya* (illusory will) hast created the sum total of the *Bhutas* (the fundamental elements ; *Khiti*, *Ap*, *Tejas*, *Marut* and *Byom*) ; and without undergoing any change thyself, thou art with ease maintaining them all in thy Great Soul, like a spider bringing out its energy out of itself. (1-5).

What object in this world is superior in quality or medium or equal compared to thee ? Names of men etc., forms of biped etc. and objects distinguished by colour of white, black etc and of material or subtle qualities,—all were known to me to have been created by thee only and none else than thee. But on seeing thee practising so rigid austerities, my *Buddhi* (understanding) has been perplexed. I am so led to presume, therefore, that besides thee there may be another *Iswara* (God). O thou omniscient one ! O thou Lord of all ! I now beg of thee to please so instruct me that I may understand all these."

Thereupon Brahma spoke,—“My child ! This thy doubt and query is quite praiseworthy. In the shape of this thy query, thou hast done me good, inasmuch as it behoves me now to recite the glory of *Bhagavan* (the supreme Lord)

My son ! Thou hast called me *Iswara* (God), and it is not untrue ; because I do possess really the like qualities. But, perhaps thou knoweth not that there is One *Iswara* (God) superior to me ; and it is, therefore, that thou art so saying. Just as Sun, Moon and the

- Planets and Stars etc make all visible objects visible, similarly I too more fully display as created the whole Universe which is manifested of itself. 6-11).

"I do bow down unto that Lord Vasudeva through the influence of whose irresistible *Maya* you all are calling me the creator of the world. But even that irresistible *Maya* is seized with shame on staying before His look. Those of small understanding like us become overpowered by the illusory influence of *Maya* and with vain vaunts profess themselves saying 'My' (thereby expressing independent authority, though in reality there is none else to claim any mastery save that One Absolute Eternal Lord.) In reality be it an object, an action, a nature and a jiva (individual living-being) or whatsoever else than these,—there is none or nothing superior to Vasudeva. Narayana is the source of all the Vedas, of *Punya lokas* (abode assigned for the pious or virtuous) such as the heaven and of the sacrifices. The dieties (celestial gods) have been emanated from the limbs of Narayana. Speak of *Yoga*. *Tapasya*, knowledge or the fruits of yogas,—Narayana is the central source of all. He has created me, and the whole universe also is His creation. But that soul of all, though the real creator is He, ever remains as an on-looker. Therefore so directed to by a glance of His, I do reveal again as a creator everything of His creation. (12-17).

"Indeed He is attributeless, but for purposes of creation, preservation and destruction He assumes through illusion the three qualities namely *Sattwa*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. *Dravya* (the fundamental elements), *Jnana* (knowledge represented by the deities personified) and *Kriyasraya* (the sense-organs) or, to put more clearly, the five great elements, the dieties and the three qualities serving as motive-power of the senses,—all these always associate Him who is ever-free and without influence of *Maya* (illusion) as an object under the influence of *Maya*. O Nārada! That Great Being *Adhokshaja* (a name of Vishnu) Himself is the

Lord of myself as well as of all else. Only his devotees are capable of comprehending His ways by means of the three qualities (*Sattwa* etc.) which form the name conception of the *Jivas*. That Lord of *Maya* being desirous of assuming diverse forms manifested Himself as Destiny, Deed and Nature by means of His active creative will. (18-21),

“Due to predomination of *Parameswara* (the Lord of all) Time, the equilibrium of the three qualities viz *sattwa* etc. becomes disturbed,—or the permutation and combination of the qualities are caused,—and thereby the motive power for the creation is produced. Variety of forms come out of Nature. And as result of Action comes out *Mahat tattwa* (Intellect) Then, due to preponderance of *Rajas* and *Sattwa* over *Mahat tattwa* is given birth to the third quality viz *Tamas*,—which is called *Ahankara-tattwa* (consciousness of pride),—relating to substance, cognition and action. The *Ahankaratattwa* again when agitated can be differentiated into the three kinds viz *Sattwika Rajasika* and *Tamasika*. Of the *Sattwika-Ahankara* are born the deities (gods); of the *Rajasika Ahankara* result the senses; and of the *Tamasika Ahankara* form the five great elements. *Tamasika-Ahankara* influenced again by *Tamasa* aspect produce the sky. Sound is the subtle form and special characteristic or attribute of the Sky. Sound indicates seer and the seen. For, if any one exclaims “there is the elephant”, “there is the elephant” from beyond a barrier through which one cannot see,—even then the hearer can understand the seer of the elephant and also the elephant so seen from that exclamation. From agitation of the *Akasa* (sky ; the ethereal sphere) is caused air, and touch is the attribute of the air. Air, being thus related to the sky through causation, is attributive to sound which is also an attribute of the sky. The air sustains body and puts energy to the senses, mind and body system. Through unseen causes of providential dispensation and also through natural influence when the air is agitated it forms energy (*Teza*). Form is the

natural attribute of energy (*teza*). On account of causal-relation, the sky-attribute sound and the air-attribute touch are manifest in energy (*Teza*). (22-27).

Agitation of energy produces water. Moisture is the natural essence of water. Due to causal-relation in water is manifest the sky-attribute sound, air attribute touch and the energy attribute form. Earth is the manifestation of water. Smell is the natural attribute of the earth. Due to causal-relation of the earth with water energy (*teza*), air and sky the earth is the stay of sound, touch, form and moisture. The *sattwika* aspects of the *ahankara-tattva* when agitated, produce Mind, Moon, Quarters, Air, Sun, Varuna (the god of water), the twin Aswinis, the Fire-god (Agni), Indra, Upendra. Mitra and Prajapati the gods who predominate over the senses. From agitation of the *Rajasa* aspect of *ahankara tattva* intellect are produced Buḍdhi (cognitive power, the power of Knowledge), Prana (the power of activity), ear, touch, nose, eye, tongue, speech, hand, rectum, foot and the spine. The above elements, senses, mind and attributes unless combined together cannot form the body. Only through divine dispensation under their permutation and combination they produce both synthetic and analytic body. (28-33).

The mundane universe in embryo rested on the surface of water for one thousand years, and thereafter Paramatma, the emanation of consciousness, being manifest in Destiny, Time, Action and Nature breathed life (made conscious) to the same. Then that Great Being, the Primordial Purusha burst open that mundane egg and came out therefrom with thousand feet, thousand hands, and thousand faces etc. O King, the wise ones imagine that the world is evolved out of the limbs of that Male Being, and their conception runs thus :—From His seven lower parts (loins etc) were formed the seven nether regions ; from His seven upper parts (hips etc) were formed the seven upper regions ; and the Brahmanas proceeded from

His mouth, the Kshatriyas from His arms, the Vaishyas from His thighs and the Sudras proceeded from His feet. Towards the pair of His feet is the Earth, towards His navel is the *Bhūva-loka*, towards His heart is the *Svarloka* and towards His breast is the *Maharloka*. From His neck proceeded the *Jana-loka*, from His lips the *Tapaloka*, from his head the *Brahmaloka*, from his loins the *Atala*, from His thighs *Bitala*, from His knees the *Sutala* from His legs the *Talatala* from His heels the *Mahatala*, towards the front of His feet the *Rasatala* and under His feet is the *Patala*. Thus the Great Male-Being is manifested all throughout the worlds, and His feet rest on the Earth (*Bhur-loka*) His navel is the *Bhūvarloka* and over His head is conceived of the *Svarloka*. (34.42).

CHAPTER VI.

THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

Brahma said,—‘My son Nārada ! What shall I speak to you of the numberless attributes of that Primordial Being, Sri Hari ? His mouth is the origin of our organ of speech and its presiding deity *Agni* (the God of Fire). Thus, from the seven humours of His body have originated the Vedas. From His tongue have been produced nectar and all other delicious things which are food of the celestials, of the manes (the *Pitris*), and of men From His nostrils have been produced our *Prana* (consciousness) and *Bayu* (vital air) His nose (the organ of smell) is the origin of the twin Aswinis, of the firmament and of the other variety of smells. From His eyes have originated all forms (*Rūpas*) and lustres (*Tejas*). The Heaven and the Sun represent the pair of His eye-balls (pupils). The quarters (*Dikhas*) and the Holy places (Pilgrimages) have originated

from His ears. His organ of hearing represent *Akasa* (sky) and *Śabda* (sound). His body is the root of the essence of all things and fortunes. His organ of touch (*tvak*, skin) represent touch, air and sacrifices. The hairs of His body represent all trees by which sacrifices are performed. His hairs represent the clouds. His beards are the causes of flashes of lightnings. His nails are the sources of stone and iron. His arms represent the presiding deities of the quarters (*Lokapalas*). His footstep is the stay of the three *Lokas*) viz Bhurloka, Bhuvvarloka and Swarloka. His foot is the root of the qualities of preserving acquired things, of protecting persons seeking shelter, of all desires and of all boons. (1-7).

“Then again, His male-organ is the root of water, seminal fluid, creation, rain and *Prajapati* (Patriarch) ; and His penis (the tip of the organ of generation) is the source of solace against attempt at enjoyment, consequent upon begetting offspring. O Narada ! His anus is the origin of *Yama* (the God of Death), His organ of making water, and His rectum etc. are the root cause of origin of envy, ill-luck, death and hell. His back is the source of defeat, vice and ignorance. His intestinal tubular systems are the sources of rivers. His bones are the sources of mountains. His belly is the source of cooked rice, various other principal foods, oceans and the elements ; and His heart is the source of the components of our subtle bodies. The soul of that *Paramatma* (Great Soul) is the root of Virtue, thyself, my sons (Sanaka and others), Sri Rudra, Sciences and Sattwa. (8-12).

Myself, thyself, Rudra, Sanaka, Marichi and the other first set of Munis Suras (the celestials), Asuras, men, Nagas, birds, deers, reptiles, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Yakshas, Rakshasas, Bhutas, Urugas (Serpents), Beasts, Pitris (the Manes), Siddhas, Vidyadharas, Charanas, trees, Planets, Stars, comets, clouds and all other creatures living in water on land and in the sky, are all manifestations of that

Great Being (Purusha). He is the Past, Present and Future. Even though He is of ten fingers (*Dasanguli*; about 5 inches) in height, He exists covering the whole universe. Just as the sun being illumined in its own orbit also illumines everything else beyond its orbit, similarly that Great Being assumes innumerable forms and manifests Himself as well as all other objects within and without His Universe-form. (13-17).

He is the Lord of *Amrita* (nectar) and *Abhaya* (fearlessness) inasmuch as He is above the pale of actions which cause death (so that He is the Lord of emancipation which frees all being from fear). Such is the limitless greatness of the Great God! The *Bhurloka* and the other regions represent different parts of His body. Thus it goes therefore that all creatures and regions are situate at His feet i.e., in regions about His feet. He is the head of the three regions. In the three regions (*lokas*) existing above Maharloka, He has placed *Amrita* (immortality), *Kshetra* (protection of the things acquired) and *Abhaya* (fearlessness). Strictly adherents to *Brahmacharyya*, *Banaprastha* and *Yati* (the three orders of religious asramas) are not to assume birth as sons to others; and therefore these three orders of asceticism represent His three feet and these three *Asramas* (stages) are situate outside the three regions. But the *Grihis* (those following Girhastya i.e. householders) do not adhere to the vow of Brambacharyya; and therefore the Asrama of the Grihis is within the three regions. That knower of all stages of existence and the all-pervading Purusha with a view to create variety of objects traverses both ways that lead respectively to Enjoyment and Emancipation; and thus it is therefore that both Wisdom and Ignorance (*Vidya* and *Avidya*) rest on Him.

The mundane form of the universe and all forms of the universe possessing all functions of the senses have sprung from Him; but as the sun although bestowing heat all

over the earth is yet separate from it, so also He is separate from all universe forms and also the universe itself (18-22).

I myself have been originated from the lotus that sprang from His navel. I had no knowledge that the materials of sacrifices are separate from His limbs. Beasts, trees, *Kusa* (a kind of grass known by that name), sacrificial altar, spring and the other seasons, *Java* (Barley plants) and the other plants, *Ghrita* (clarified butter) and the other oily substances, honey and the other suit juices, gold and the other metals, earth, water, *Rik*, *Jaju*, *Saman*, oblations and other actions, *Jyotistoma* and the other names of *Yajnas* (sacrifices), *Swaha* and the other mantras (religious texts), *Dakshina* (gifts), vow, the invocation to dieties, *Kalpa* (the vedic texts), *Sankalpa* (resolutions of the ceremonies), the movements, mentality, penance and dedication of the performances to God,—though all these materials pertaining to sacrifices are scattered and separate,—I procured them all by His limbs! Having thus gathered all the materials of sacrifices by virtue of His limbs, I performed the sacrifice and thereby propitiated the Great God who Himself is the Sacrifice (23-28).

Thereafter thy brethren, the nine *Prajapatis* (Patriarchs), The Manus, the other sages, the *Pitris* (the Manes), the celestials, the *Daityas* (Asuras), and men, according to their circumstances took up their respective vows and with concentrated mind worshipped and propitiated by sacrifices the Great Purusha who is manifest in forms such as Indra (the king of gods) etc. and in subtle form of the nature of His Soul. My child! This universe exists in the Great Narayana. He is attributeless. But, at the time of creation, He becomes possessed of the great attributes by reason of His association with Maya. It is at His command that I am engaged in creation. *Mahadeva* (Siva) also is engaged in Destruction by His command. And He, the Lord Himself maintains the universe assuming

the form of Vishnu. Thus it is that the Great God is the possessor of the three-fold energies. My boy ! I have thus related to thee what thou wanted to hear from me. In the whole sphere of actions and the instruments thereof, there is nothing else than the Great God (29-33).

O Narada, I do ever meditate upon Hari in my heart with utmost devotion. It is therefore that my words and thought never proves untrue, and my senses do never go astray. I am all in Vedas and Asceticism. Even the *Prajapati's* the great patriarchs, worship me as their Lord. I am ever merged in yoga with single minded concentration. Even yet I have not been able exactly to know Him from whom I have sprung into existence. Just as the limitless sky itself knows not its limit, so the great God Himself knows not the limit of his own *Maya* (illusory will) ; far to speak of the other gods, therefore. I do bow down unto His feet, *Jivas* (individual beings) attain freedom from the worldly bonds by taking resort to His feet. His feet are the sources of supreme auspiciousness in all spheres of welfares. When Rudra (Siva), thee and myself have not been able to precisely understand His Real self how can then the other gods do so ? We are all under the influence of His illusion and being so influenced according to our respective buddhi (intellect) we do indeed sing eulogy upon His manifestations and glories, but nevertheless we are not able to ascertain His Real Self (true tattwa about Him). Therefore I do bow down unto that Great God (34-38).

That Primordial *Purusha* (Male Being) who is without any birth, at each of the different *Kalpas* (Cycle of Time), begets Him on Himself by Himself and Himself maintains Himself. He is the embodiment of Purity, Truth and Knowledge. He is *Antaryamin* (abiding in all hearts at the same time), beyond any doubt and devoid of any attribute, and it is by reason of this that there is no agitation in Him consequent upon the agitation of the attri-

butes. He is true, perfect, without birth and death, without any attribute, eternal and One without a Second, When the Munis become purified in body, sense and the mind,—they then can know Him as above. But when the minds of the Munis become enshrouded with false reasonings, the aforesaid true image of the Lord disappears. Narada, the first incarnation of the great God was in the form of that *Purusha* who lorded over *Prakriti*, Besides that time, nature, the action, Prakriti as an agent of action, mind, the great elements, *Ahankara tattwa* (the sense of pride), the three-fold qualities (Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas), the physical body comprising the senses, the subtle body mobile and immobile objects, myself, Rudra, Vishnu, Prajapatis, the other Devarshis (divine-sages), the lords of *Svarloka* and *Kharloka*, the lords of human beings, the lords of Patala (Nether region) etc- the lords of *Gandharvas Vidyadharas Charanas Yakshas Uragas Nagas*, the best of Rishis Pitris, the lord of Daityas (Asuras) the lords of *Siddhas Danavas*, Pretas, Pisachas, Bhutas Kusmanda, Jadus, the Kings of Beasts and Birds and all that is glorious in the universe having illumination, energy, mental-powers, prowess, forgiveness, beauty, wealth, shyness, intelligence, uncommon colour, gracefulness and ugly all these are the Paratattwa or the Bibhutis (attributes of distinction) or manifestations of the Parama Purusha, the great God. Narada, hearing of the glorious attributes and deeds of the great God destroys the impurity of the ear. I shall now relate all these unto thee and do thee drink the sanctifying theme by thine ears. (39-46).

CHAPTER VII.

THE ACTIONS OF THE INCARNATIONS OF GOD.

Brahma said,—That Eternal Divine Person assumed the body of a Boar—the source of all sacrifices—and tore into

pieces with his teeth the first of the Daity race, Hiran-yaksha by name with a view to raise up the Earth from the abysmal depth of ocean. He was born as Sujajna in the womb of Akuti by Prajapati Ruchi, and Sujajna begat Susama and other foremost of the Immortals on Dakshina. He having thus removed the great distress and fear of the three worlds was named as Hari by Swayambhuva Manu. O Dwija, He was again born with His nine sisters by the Prajapati Kardama on Devahuti, and imparted to His mother *Brahmavidya* (the knowledge of Brahman) By virtue of that knowledge, even in her that very birth, her mind became cleansed of the dirt consequent upon the association with the qualities that spoliates the purity of the mind. Having thus acquired the purity of mind, she attained to the state of emancipation. My boy, Atri prayed for the God to be born as her son. Thereupon the merciful Lord was pleased upon her and spoke, "I have conferred myself upon thee" Accordingly He was named "*Datta*" Jadu, Haihaya and others purified their bodies by the sanctifying filaments of His lotus feet and thereupon achieved all enjoyments on earth and advancement in Yoga for final emancipation. At the beginning, with a view to create various lines of progeny, I engaged myself in the undivided penance known as *Sam*. As a result of my said penance the Lord assumed Himself as Sanatkumar, Sanaka, Sanandan and Sanatan all the four names beginning with the significant "San". Thereupon the Lord related to those Rishis the *atmatattwa* (the true knowledge of the self or the Soul) which Knowledge was lost in oblivion at the end of the preceding *Kalpa* (Cycle of Time.) Instantly with the revelation of the Knowledge unto them those Rishis had realised the fruition of that knowledge in their hearts. (1-5)

Thereupon the Lord assumed Himself as Nara-Narayana of wonderful might in the womb of *Murti*, the wife of *Dharma* (the God of Piety, and the daughter of Daksha

At that time the Apsaras, who are the followers of *Cupid* (the God of Love), attempted at disturbing Him from His *Tapasya* (practice on meditation). But when they saw that Urvasi and the other celestial nymphs of their like are issuing forth from His body, they became immensely bewildered, and their attempts ended in deserving defeat. Siva and the other divinities were capable of burning down *Kama* (Cupid) by their angry look, whereas they are unable to destroy their own sense of anger, which in its own way burns their heart unbearably. But even anger of so invincible prowess dares not to enter into the absolutely pure heart of the Lord Hari. How can, therefore, *Kama* agitate His mind? Thereafter Hari assumed Himself as *Dhruba*. He was very greatly aggrieved by the shaft-like poignant words spoken to him by his step-mother in the presence of the king *Uttanpad*. Thus sorely grieved at heart he went out into the forest even in his then very tender age to engage himself in asceticism. The merciful Lord was too pleased with *Dhruba's* meditation and conferred upon him habitation in *Dhrubaloka*. *Bhrigu* and other illustrious *Munis* residing in the region above as well as the *Sapta* (Seven) *Devarshis* (divine-sages) residing in the region beneath always pray for the *Dhrubaloka*. The King *Vena* treading in the paths of iniquity became shorn of his prosperity and prowess. The King was ultimately to have fallen in Hell. *Narayana*, the Lord was born as the king's son as prayed for by the *Rishis* and saved the king *Vena* from the hell (as called *Put*) and thereby justified the literal meaning of the word *Puttra* (a male-child). In this His incarnation as the King *Prithu* the King *Vena's* son the Earth was milched by him and various valuables were received. *Narayana* also was incarnated as *Rishabha* born of *Sudevi* the wife of *Nabhi*, the son of *Agnidhra*. In this incarnation as *Rishabha*, he meditated on the self in his mind, controlled his senses and dissociated from all worldly things he lived like an inanimate

object and thought of a state in *Siddhanta* (religious discipline) denominated by the Sages as *Paramahansa* Stage. (6-10).

Thereafter, in the incarnation as *Hayagriha* the Lord became manifest in my sacrifice with a horse-head on, of golden hue, and as embodiment of all the Vedas, sacrifices and celestials. In this incarnation the melodious words or hymns of the Vedas were breathed through his nostrils. Vaivaswata Manu saw Narayana assuming the form of a fish that was the stay of all Jivas (creatures) of the earth at the time of dissolution of the universe at the end of a kalpa. At that time on seeing the work of dissolution I was so afraid that the hymn of the Vedas dropped from my mouth, and the fish sported in the waters taking up the Vedic hymn. When the Devas (gods) and the Danavas (demons) were engaged in churning the ocean of milk (Khira-Samudra) with a view to obtain Amrita (nectar) the Primordial Being Narayana assumed the shape of a Tortoise and bore on his back the mount Mandara that formed the churning-rod. At that time the revolving of the Mandara mountain on His back in the course of the churning seemed to be but itching on the back to cause His drowsiness. The Lord then assumed the form of *Nrisingha* (partly a human form and partly a lion; Man and Lion) and tore into pieces with His nails the Lord of the Daityas, Hiranyakasipu by name, who was approaching the celestials with a dreadful club in his hand, Hari thus removed a great fear from the minds of the gods. In this form His face worn a very dreadful sight by reason of the rolling eye-brows and grinding teeth. O my boy! Once a huge Elephant, who was the leader of a herd of elephants, having been caught on the leg by a very large crocodile in the water and being very much distressed thereby, addressed very pitiuously the Lord saying:—“O thou bearing a lotus in your hand (Kamala Kara)! O thou Prime Purusha! O thou Lord of all the worlds! O thou

of holy names ! O thou of sacred deeds ! Thereupon the Lord Hari having the *Chakra* (a discus ; the celebrated weapon Sudarsan-Chakra) in His hand hearing the prayers of the elephant knew him to be His devotee and seeking for His help quite compassionately appeared at the place of occurrence seated Himself on *Gaṇḍa* (the celebrated King of birds) and slew the Crocodile with a stroke of His Chakra and thereafter He raised the elephant from the water catching by his trunk. (11-16)

In the incarnation of the God as a Dwarf although He was the youngest in age of the twelve sons of Aditi, He was indeed the eldest of all by virtue of His accomplishments ; for He invaded the three worlds with His three feet. In this incarnation in the occasion of the sacrifice by the King Vali He obtained the three worlds from Vali by a tricky prayer for three paces of land. The Great God is indeed the Lord of all ; but the people treading the path of virtue should never be divested of their prosperity without being begged. For this reason the Lord as a dwarf asked Vali to give Him land to place His three feet. O Narada ! the King Vali held on his head the water washing the feet of the glorious Hari ; and even though prevented by Sukracharyya, being bent upon acting to the full satisfaction of his promise, he dedicated himself for the purpose of keeping the third feet of Hari upon his head. To such a highminded one as Vali was, can even the sovereignty over the three worlds be the object worth his manliness ? Never so. Thus it was that the Lord divested him of all that. O Narada ! When your devotion to Narayana grew to a great extent, He was very pleased towards you and He, in the shape of a Swan (*Hansavatar*), related to you the yoga systems and the various courses that lead to the true knowledge of the Self (*atmatattva*). No one can attain to that knowledge who has not taken resort to the feet of the Lord Vasudeva. Satyaloka is above the three regions. The Lord performed many glorious deeds in Satyaloka and

assumed Himself as Manvantaras. The *Sudarsan-Chakra* is but the outward manifestation of His own energy. By that Sudarsan-Chakra He chastises the wicked Kings. Identical with His glories, the Lord in His incarnation as *Dhanwantari* (the physician of the celestials) destroyed merely by His names the various incurable diseases. That resuscitator of life, in His same incarnation obtained the due portion of the sacrifices which was forfeited by the Daityas, and promulgated the science of *Ayurveda* (The Hindu Medical Science), (17-21).

The Kshatriyas showed to have swarved from the paths assigned to them by the Vedas, and contrary to the Vedic instructions they acted against the Brahmins; this proved their willingly leading themselves to the path of Hell. Further, their actions seemed to show that God had given them so much might and prowess to cause harm to the world. Thus it was that the Lord Vishnu incarnated Himself as Parasu Rama of irresistible prowess, who exterminated three times seven the Kshatriyas, and thus removed the thorns of the world. That Lord of Maya, being compassionate towards us, was born in four divine portions (Rama, Bharata, Lakshmana and Satrughna) in the race of Ikshaku. In this incarnation as Rama, in obedience to his sire's (the King Dasaratha's) order he went to the forest with his wife (Sita) and younger brother (Lakshmana). While in the forest, the wicked Rakshasa King Ravana came into conflict with him and was destroyed. As previously the Lord Siva was about to burn into ashes the city of Tripura with his angry looks, so also when Sri Ramachandra looked towards his enemy's (Ravana's) city (Lanka), with a view to burn it down to ashes, the ocean trembling with fear offered him (Rama) the way through. The wicked Rakshasa King Ravana having stolen away his (Rama's) beloved wife (Sita) he was agitated with great wrath due to which his eyes were turned blood-shot. By his (Rama's) wrathful looks the aquatic animals living in the ocean such

as the serpents crocodiles and whales etc. were greatly afflicted. On seeing which the ocean became much afraid and trembling with fear offered Rama to cross over. The tusks of Airavata, the elephant of Indra were broken into pieces when struck against Ravana's breast. With the white pieces of ivory as from the broken tusk of Airavata, the quarters were rendered white. On seeing this Ravana thought himself to have conquered all the quarters and laughed with pride for his victory. Rama strung his bow and put arrows to it which killed that stealer of his wife with his laugh of pride amidst the army of his own and also of Rama. (22-25).

Thereafter the Lord Narayana incarnated Himself as Ramakrishna (Balarama and Krishna), with white and black colours respectively. In this incarnation He saved the world from the aggrandisement of the army of the Asura-Kings, and performed various uncommon feats indicating His greatness. While He was quite a boy, He killed a Rakshasi Putana by name. When he was only three months in age, He broke a cart with a kick. While going on His knees between two huge trees, Jataka and Arjuna, rising with a jump high up He uprooted the trees. Who else than God could perform all those feats? When the cows on the pasture ground of *Braja* (Brindavana) as also the cowherds (Gopalas) lost their senses due to their drinking of the poisonous water of the river Jumna, Sri Krishna revived them with His favoured look, and He also entered into the waters of the Jumna, and controlled the deadly poisonous serpent Kaliya. To whom else than God those feats could have been possible?

In the night following the day on which the Lord subdued the Kaliya snake, the forest trees dried up due to extreme heat of the day was being burnt down by the forest fire when the Braja-Gopalas were asleep. Thus, when the lives of the Gopalas were at stake, Sri Krishna and Balarama of unlimited prowess saved the Braja-boys. This

feat also was absolutely uncommon. When Jasoda, His foster mother, intended to bind him with ropes, he assumed such a huge dimension that no amount of ropes, was sufficient to tie him. Thereafter once when he yawned the Gopi (milk-woman) saw in the cavity of his mouth all the regions of the universe and became much afraid. Thereupon she knew him to be the God. Was not this quite uncommon? To whom else than God it could have been possible? (26-30).

He saved Nanda from the fear of Varuna's noose, when Byom, the son of the demon Maya, had stolen away and kept the Braja boys hidden in a lake, Hari released them and he took to Baikuntha those Gopas (milk-men) who used to be busy during the day time to their respective works and slept in the night. This too was very uncommon. When he was only seven years old, the Gopas having put obstacles to the sacrifice of Indra the King of the Celestials was angry and poured down heavy incessant showers continuously for seven days. At that time being compassionate to the distress of the Brajabasis (inhabitants of Braja) rather with ease he held up the Gobardhan mountain in his hands. This feat also was inhuman. Being desirous of sports he was roaming about in the orchards over flooded with silvery moon beams in the full moon night and filled up the whole atmosphere with melodious songs in symphony with musical notes. Charmed with the enchanting songs the Brajanganas (the damsels of Braja) went out of their houses and followed him by the strain of the song. Thereupon among the followers of Kubera (the God of Riches), one Sankachura by name kidnapped the damsels, and therefore Sri Kṛiṇa chopped off his head. This work also was inhuman. Balarama etc are but His assumed names. Therefore, Pralamba, Khara, Baka, Keshi, Arista, Malla, Kubalayapid, Jabana, Kapi, Pann-draka, Sallwa, Naraka, Baikala, Dantabakra, Saptaksha, Sambara, Viduratha, and Rukmi etc. and also Kamboja

Myatsa, Kuru, Srinjaya and Kekaya etc all that bore arms with great pride against Sri Krishna, the latter killed all of them and being slain in his hand they were taken to *Baikuntha* (the abode of God). These war-fares were also uncommon. (31-35).

Alas ! On seeing that the understanding of the people waning and their longevity decreasing under the influence of time gradually in the succeeding yugas — Hari, the Lord of the Universe, thought . "It is becoming hard for the people to get at the end of the Vedas brought into light by me." Thereupon the Lord incarnated Himself as Vyasa on Satyabati and divided the Vedas into several branches. Asuras, the enemies of the celestials, became proficient in the knowledge of the Vedas, and having got made by *Mayadanaba* (an Asura of that name) an invisible eity of velocity, engaged themselves in the destruction of the people. Thereupon the glorious God incarnated Himself as Buddha, and with a view to bring about a confusion of their understanding and to creat avarice in them taught them many false religions in the guise of a Pashanda (One setting the true religious texts at naught). At the end of the Kali-yuga, when even in the house of the pious people will not be sung and discussed the glories of Hari ; when the Brahmanas, the Kshatriyas, and the Vaisyas will become atheists ; when the Sudras will be Kings and will rule over the earth ; and when the chanting of Vedic mantras such as Swaha, Swadha and Vasatkar, etc will not be heard ; then the Great God will incarnate Himself as Kalki and will punish Kali. O my boy, at the time of creation, our undertaken religious rites, I myself and the nine *Prajapatis* (Patriarchs) ; at the time of preservation, Virtue, Vishnu, Manu, the King of the celestials and the Kings of the earth ; and at the time of destruction, Vice (impiety), Hara (Siva) and the angry Serpents and Asuras ; all these are but the manifestations of the all-powerful illusive will (Maya) and attributes of

the Great God. O Narada ! None can count the innumerable *Bibhūtis* (attributes) of Vishnu. One who is capable of numbering the atoms of the earth can he even count the attributes of God ? Once Vishnu agitated the component of the three qualities with the velocity of His unagitated legs while moving, and thereby even the Satyaloka was agitated, and for this reason He then held the Satyaloka in its position. The Munis born before you and I myself have not been able to get at the end of this Puruṣha, having the power of Maya. How then will those, having their birth after us, can know of it ? The *Adi-deva*, (the first of the gods) Ananta having thousand mouths has not yet been able to chant the end of His glories. Those having the grace of God and having taken resort to his feet sincerely and with undivided mind can get through to the end of His impenetrable Maya. They are freed from the worthless vanity or egoism and do not vaunt of "me" and "mine" in relation to the body which is the food of the dogs and the jackals. (36-42)

I myself, you and Śunaka etc. the Lord Bhāṇa (Śiva), Pralhada—the foremost of the Druṭyas, the wife of Manu, Manu himself, the two sons and the daughters of Manu, Prachinvarhi, Ribhu, Anga, Dhrubha, Ikṣhwaku, Aila, Muchukunda, Videha, Gadhi, Raghu, Ambarisha, Sagara, Gaya, Yajati, Mandhata, Alarka, Satadhanu, Rantideva, Devabrata, Vali, Amurtaraya, Dilipa, Saubhari, Utanka, Sibi, Debaka, Pippalada, Saraswata, Uddhaba, Parasara, Bhurisena, Bibhishana, Hanumana, Suka, Arjuna, Arstisena, Vidura, Srutadeva, and all other great Sages are cognisant of His (the Lord's) *Yogamaya* (divine illusions). What more—the women, the Sudras, the Hunas, the Sabaras and other uncivilised races leading vicious lives when become devotees of the Lord of wonderful achievements and learn to follow path of the pious,—even they then can understand the divine illusions and can also get over them in due course. It follows therefore that those who single:

mindedly meditate upon the image of the Lord, can certainly understand the illusions of the Lord, and can also be free from them. (43-46)

The Munis sing on the real self of the Lord as calm, full of happiness for all time, devoid of fear and grief, emanation of knowledge, pure dissociated from attachment to worldly objects and *Paramartha tattva* (knowledge conducive to the supreme welfare ; He is not describable by any word or sound ! He is not subject to the four-fold result of actions such as birth etc : and before whom *Maya* (illusion personified) feels ashamed of staying and flies away from Him. Just as the poor digger coming across a great treasure becomes too rich to take care any longer of the instrument for digging, similarly the earnest Yogins having been able to fix their mind unflinchingly on Him can then leave even knowledge that eliminates the error due to distinction between the Great Soul and the individual soul. The glorious God is the source of all blessings ; for it was He who originally introduced all auspicious actions performed by Brahmans and others. The sky is visible in a pot ; but just as the sky is not shattered to pieces with the breakage of the pot, so also the soul is not destroyed with the dissolution of the component elements of the body that garb the soul, as the soul is never born. O my son, I have thus related to you in brief the Real Identity of the glorious God. Every thing constituting actions and the causes thereof are identically nothing else than Narayana. God has thus related to me all these and so they are entitled the Bhagabata. This Bhagabata is a compilation of all His glories. Do thou now spread them in the earth with details. You will recount them in such a manner as would foster in the minds of the people a growing sense of devotion towards the Lord Sri Hari. He who describes the divine illusions, he who takes pleasure in such discourses and he who daily listen to such discourses their soul shall not be overwhelmed with illusions. (47-53).

CHAPTER VIII

THE QUERIES OF PARIKSHIT REGARDING BHAGBATA.

The King Parikshit enquired of Suk-deva saying,—
 “O foremost of those conversant with the essence of all knowledge! I wish to hear the discourses on the glories of God who is devoid of all attributes as spread by divine Narada in various manner to various people when he was so asked by Brahma to so spread the account of the Lord Sri Hari of unaccountable prowess. O thou of a great merit! Do thou proceed on to relate the discourses on Sri Hari, so that I may in the meantime be able to place my mind on Sri Krishna, the Soul of the Universe and at last be able to renounce this body of mine. The glorious Lord instantly enters into the hearts of those people who with great devotion ever listen to the account of Hari and also recite the same themselves. Just as the impurities of water is removed with the setting in of the autumn season, so entering through the ears into the lotus-like hearts of the Saints, Sri Krishna washes away impurities of theirs hearts. (1-5).

As a traveller once returning home does not wish to leave it, so also a person having his soul washed off all sins does not quit the foot of Sri Krishna. O Brahman! The soul has no connection with the elements; still the gross body of the soul is the result of the synthesis of the elements. Is this due to his own will or the result of some action? You know all these. The lotus which is the source of the creation of the Universe has originated from the navel of that Purusha. Thou hast related that just as a person has his various limbs proportionate to his body, so also that Purusha appears in various shapes in relation to His manifestation. It behoveth thee to relate to me the place where that Purusha is lying asleep renouncing all His illusions and assuming His own self; the Purusha who knows the hearts of all, who is the creator

preserver and destroyer of the universe, who is the Lord of Maya (illusion personified), by whose grace Brahma controller of the elements originating from His navel has created the world and has been able to perceive the real identity of the Lord. (6-10).

You have related that the *Lokapalas* (the presiding deities of the regions) and the regions had been created by the limbs of that Purusha. And again I understand from you that His limbs have been created by the *Lokapalas* and the *Lokas* (regions). What is the significance of such statements ; what is the extent of the *Mahakalpa* (the great or full Kalpa) and *Abantarkalpa* (the intermediate Kalpa)? How to understand the extent of the time as denoted by the terms past, future and present? Do thou relate to me the duration of the life of man having the pride of corporeal body, the Pitris (the manes) and the gods ; the causes that make the course of time longer and shorter the description of the different regions attainable as a result of various actions the respective results of various actions as performed by various persons aspiring to attain to god-head which is the resultant of the combination of the three qualities and also do thou relate to me the history of creation of the *Prithibi* (the Earth) *Patala* (the nether regions) *Dikas* (the quarters) *Akasa* (the sky) *Graha* (Planet) *Nakshatra* (Sky) *Parbata* (Mountain) *Nadi* (River) *Samudra* (Ocean) and *Dwipa* (Island) and also the inhabitants of those places ; the dimension of the *Brahmanda* (Universe) within and without ; the character of the great-men and the methods of ascertaining the order and asrama of the great ; the number of yugas and the extent of a yuga and the different religions that flourished in different yugas. What is the wonderful incarnation of the Lord Sri Hari and the deeds performed by Him in that incarnation? What is the universal religion of mankind? What are the duties attached to the various *Varnas* and *Asramas*

What are the duties of traders *Rajārshis* (Royal Sages) and miserable persons ? (11—18)

What is the number of elements etc ? What is their nature and characteristics ? What are the various modes of worshipping the deities ? What are the different processes of the eight Yoga systems ? What is the way of the wealth achieved by the masters of Yogas ? How the subtle bodies of the yogins are dissolved ? What are the nature of the Vedas, Upa-Vedas (Branches of the Vedas) Scriptures Histories and Puranas ; How are the intermediate dissolutions of the elements effected ? How are the Preservation and final dissolution (*Mahapralaya*) of the universe brought about ? What are the procedures of offering oblations to the fire and acting up to the religious injunction (*Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha.*). How are the beings believing in the existence of the deities and again the atheists created ? How the bondage and liberation of the soul are caused ? How does the soul exist in its real self ? How does the glorious God ever under His own will sport with *Maya* ? How again does He renounce *Maya* and stand aloof as a witness at the time of dissolution of the universe ? O thou godly one ! I do enquire of thee about all these things. Do thou explain them to me in detail from the beginning to the end. (19—24).

Like that of the self-created Brahma, thou art an authority in these things. Other sages do merely relate the things as their predecessors did unto them. O thou great sage ! My mind has not been perturbed on account of fasting and as a matter of fact for the imprecation of the curse by the Brahmana, for this reason that I have been drinking the nectar of the glories of Sri Hari that has been raised for me from the ocean of thy words.

Suta said—O Ye Rishis ! The foremost of the Yogins, Suk-deva, having been so questioned by the King Parikshit the foremost of those devoted to the eternal Lord Vishnu, began to relate before the assembly the Bhagabat Purana

as holy as the Vedas which was originally related by Vishnu to Brahma. Also he began to answer one after the other questions put to him by the King Parikshit, the best of the Pandavas. (25—29).

CHAPTER IX.

SUKA BEGINS TO RECITE BHAGBATA.

Suka said,—O King ! Just as connections of a person with deities seen by him in dream is impossible, similarly the soul has no real connection whatsoever with body etc save its connection through the illusion of the *Parama Purusha*, the Lord Vishnu. By virtue of its association with *Maya* having the attributes of producing diversities, the Soul appears to be many and takes pride in thinking as "I" and mine". When, however, the Soul existing in its native purity,—the excellent state of existence above *Praṁkriti* and *Purusha*,—then the vain pride due to illusion of thinking as "I" and "mine" disappears and the soul shines resplendent in its native glory. It is of great importance to the people desiring the knowledge of the true state of the Soul to learn all that the Lord Vishnu having been worshipped with sincere devotion had spoken to Brahma after showing him His real self identical with true knowledge. Sitting on the lotus issued forth from the navel of the Lord Vishnu, the first deity Brahma,—the Preceptor of the world,—began to think about the creation of the universe. But he could not get at the knowledge at all by which the universe could be created nor could he perceive any idea thereof Thereupon he absorbed himself deeply in meditation. While thus meditating upon, he heard close by himself a word of two letters uttered twice on the surface of the water. Of the letters

so heard by him, one is the sixteenth (7a) and the other twentyfirst (Pa) in number of the alphabetical order of the consonants. O King, the word "*Tapā*," thus formed of the two letters is said by the learned ones to be the wealth of those who have renounced all wordly objects. On hearing that word Brahma of lotus origin looked all around him with a view to find out as to who had uttered the word. But he saw no one there. Thereupon he thought that *Tapasya* (Meditation) was the only thing conducive to his welfare, and being seated in *Padmasana* (a posture of sitting) fixed his mind in meditation. It seemed to him that some one had so clearly instructed him in the matter. (1-7)

Having controlled the vital air and the organ of senses and action, Brahma, the foremost of the ascetics, engaged himself for a thousand celestial years with concentrated mind in asceticism as a result of which the whole universe would be manifested. Narayana was much pleased towards him by virtue of that austere asceticism and had shown Brahma His own abode *Baikunth*, the most excellent region. In Baikuntha there is no pain, nor fear; and there the pious ones are ever singing on His glories. There the quality of *Sattwa* is without any taint of *Rajas* or *Tamas*. Far less to speak of avarice etc. even *Maya* (illusion) has no access there. How can I describe the beauty of His associates there? Their complexion is green evincing brilliant lustre; their eyes are expanded and resemble full blown lotus; their clothes are yellow; they possess charming gracefulness and their limbs are soft and tender. All of them have four arms wearing various ornaments set with sparkling rare gems of precious value, and they possess immeasurable effulgence; they are worshipped by the *Suras* (Deities) and *Asuras* (Daityas). They are possessed of great lustre as of *Prabala* (Coral) *Vaidurja* (a gem of serene lustre) and lotus stalk. They wear beautiful *Kundalas* (ear-rings)

Maulis (ornaments for head such as crown etc.) and garlands. *Baikuntha* (the region of Vishnu) abounds in acrial cars of beautiful look in use by those celestials,—the ears shine evincing great lustre enhanced by the dazzling beauties of celestial damsels; thus they shine as the sky beautified with hovering clouds sparkled with flashes of lightning on them, (8 12).

There Sree (the goddess of riches Lakshmi) personified accompanied by her variety of graces worships the feet of the glorious Lord Vishnu in various ways, and in symphony with the songs sung by the followers of spring, she herself chants melodiously His glories gracefully moving her head in ecstasy of joy within. Bramha arrived at Baikuntha at that time and saw there the Lord of the Devotees, Lakshmi, sacrificees and the Universe. The Lord was being then attended upon by the formost of His followers such as Sunanda, Nanda, Prabala and Ashana. A glance upon the Lord showed that He was ever ready to grant desired boons to all those serving Him. His eyes looked flushed up as from intoxication; His countenance was graced with delightful face and bewitching eyes. He had crown on His head, *Kundalas* on His ears. He wore yellow cloth and He gracefully bore on His four arms *Sankha* (conch-shell) *Chakra* (a disc-like weapon), *Gada* (a mace) and lotus-flower. He had Sree on His breast. The four primary energies are that Parama Parusha, Nature, the essence of greatness and the essence of pride; the sixteen energies are the eleven sense organs and the five great elements; there are five sources of energies of those five great elements. He, the Lord was seated on an excellent seat hallowed by His own great effulgence associated with the effulgence of the great ascetics assembled there; but He was sporting with His own real self only. Thus He was there the Great God. On so beholding the glorious God, the heart of Brahama was filled up with joy, his hairs stood on end and in token

of love and devotion flow of tears tickled down his eyes and Bramha bowed unto His feet, which cannot be attained to without taking resort to *Jnana-marga*, the path of knowledge. (13-17)

The dear one, fit to be imparted instruction, as Brahma was, when arrived before Him with desire in his heart for creating Progeny, bending down with modesty and worshipping Him with great devotion,—the Lord Vishnu being highly pleased held Brahma by the hand spoke as follows in delighted mind and smiling face :—

“O thou having the Vedas within thyself ! Desirous of creating the Universe you have been engaged in perpetual devotion and thereby you have greatly propitiated me. Yogins who are not sincere cannot earn my pleasure. Good betide thee therefore and do thou ask thy desired boon of me who am the only Lord capable of granting boons. Brahman ! Beholding Me is the ultimate blessing against the troubles taken by the people for deriving supreme good. That thou hast seen Baikuntha my abode is also due to my favour For thou hast engaged thyself in austere meditation on hearing the words *Tapa. Tapa*, (be thou given up to meditation) uttered as they were in that lonely place. Do thou know where from comes to such words so spoken as though from the sky ? When thou wert sorely anxious for the creation I had so instructed thee to meditation with those words. O thou sinless one ! Meditation is my very heart, and I myself am the soul of meditation. By dint of meditation I do create preserve and destroy the universe in due course Austere asceticism is therefore my energy.” (18-23.)

Bramha thereupon said,—‘My Lord ! Thou art the glorious God, the stay of all *Bhutas* (elements) ; and thou art thus at the root of every body’s *buddhi* (intellect). By virtue of thy unimpeded understanding therefore thou art capable of knowing thy will. But I am engaged in meditation with a view to understand it and my meditation consists in prayer to thee. O My Lord ! Do thou be

pleased to give me instruction to realise my prayed for object so that I may come to know the corporeal and subtle form of thee having no form in reality. Thy will never proves vain. Just as a spider hide itself in its cobwebs so thou assuming the form of Brahma etc hast been sporting with the Creation, Destruction and Preservation of the Universe. May the Lord Madhava grant me the Buddhi (intellect ; the power of understanding) by virtue of which I may clearly understand this His Lila (sport), By dint of the instructions imparted by thee I shall devote myself to creation after casting off the idleness. By the grace of thy mercy towards me the evil sense of pride etc will not be able to bind me O my God ! Thou hast treated me with shake of hands just as a friend to a friend. Therefore may I not be affected with any sense of pride in thinking of myself too as not born of itself, at the time when I shall be deeply engaged in the creation of all beings and thereby serve thy will. O Lord ! That sense of pride in one is the best of all outwitting intoxicants," (24—29)

Thereupon the Lord spoke—"Brahman ! The general and special knowledge and devotion about me are very secret; and yet I am relating these to thee with the respective ways (Sadhanas ; the means to the end) that lead to them. Do thee listen to me. My identity, the emanation of Sattwa, my form, attributes and actions all these shall be fully realised by thee. Only I existed before the creation of the universe. At that time there was no corporeal or subtle body or form of an object, neither was there any of the fundamental great elements that are the sources of all objects. And also at the dissolution of the Universe I only existed. All that thou beholding of this whole universe are all manifestations of my self, and again anything that shall exist after the dissolution of the universe is I. Really speaking, I am preceded by none, I am eternal and without a second, and

therefore I am all entire and whole. Though apparently meaningless, expressions such as existence of 'two Moons' etc. (though never supported by facts) exist, and there are really existing things that are not known to be existing such as 'Rahu' (which though existing among the planets is not visible) and O Brahman, thou should know these to be my illusions. [Some-times we perceive an object which does not really exist, and sometimes we do not perceive an object which really exists. These perceptions are the illusory will (Maya) of the Lord as held by the system of Vedānta Philosophy viz that except the real essence of the Great Soul, all objects of the Universe are unreal and illusory ; to consider a real thing as unreal and an unreal thing as real—such as considering a rope to be a serpent which it is not.] Just as the great fundamental elements are and are not associated with the *Bhūtas* (created objects), so also I am and am not existing in them. That which is manifest always and everywhere by *Anvaya* and *Vyatiśeka* is really the Soul. [*Anvaya* ie. an action is manifest when it is brought about by the cause entering therein, and *Vyatiśeka* ie. an action is not manifest when the cause is not therein, This system of thinking or reasoning is a doctrine of Vedānta Philosophy] Those who desire to know the real essence of the Soul will query about it. Do thou fully adhere to these my views, and thou shalt in that case never be assailed upon with the sense of pride, such as 'I am the creator, even though creating variety of objects and things in kalpa after kalpa,' (30-34).

Suka said, "O king ! Hari, the Lord without a birth, having thus instructed Brahma, the Lord of the *Lōkas* (the worlds as created by him), disappeared with His image even with the twinkle of an eye. Thereupon Brahma, who is manifest in all *Bhūtas* (creatures), with joined palms saluted unto the Lord Sri Hari who had then disappeared, and created this Universe exactly as before.

O King ! Immediately as the creation was complete, the Great Patriarch Brahma of lotus-origin desirous of the welfare of all created beings and also actuated by the desire of fulfilling his own mission had engaged himself in *Tapasya* (meditation) after controlling himself by taking recourse to all necessary disciplines. Thereupon Narada, the most beloved of all sons of Brahma, with a view to know the illusions of Vishnu, the Lord of illusions, began to serve his father with good manners, modesty and mastery over the senses. O King, the divine-sage Narada, greatly devoted to the glorious God, propitiated his father 'Brahma by so serving him. (35-41).

On seeing his father, the great Patriarch of the people, propitiated, Narada put to him the questions which you have asked me to-day to explain to you. At that time Brahma, pleased as he was to his son, recited to Narada the Bhagbata Purana which was related to him in four slokas by the glorious god. O King ! Those four slokas had ten characteristics. O King ! Narada in his turn recited the Bhagbata to illustrious Vyas-deva of immeasurable energy at a time when the latter was deeply meditating upon the great soul sitting on the banks of the river Saraswati. You have asked me to explain, among others, as to how this Universe has been originated from that Great Purusha. I shall now explain to you in detail about your questions. Do thou listen to me. (42-45)

CHAPTER X.

THE TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF BHAGBATA.

Sukdeva spoke,—“O King ! In this Bhagbata Purana there are discourses on ten subject matters, namely :—*Sarga* (creation in general by God), *Bisarga* (creation in

particular by Brahma), *Sthana* (position), *Poshana* (preservation), *Uti* (desire actuating an action), *Manwantaras* (pious modes of living by the Saintly persons), *Ishanukatha* (discourses relating to God and his devotees), *Nirodha* (merging in), *Mukti* (liberation), and *Asraya* (stay upon or support of). Of the above ten, with a view to obtain true knowledge of the tenth viz. *Asraya*, saintly people would have discourse on the nine others, by way of hearing, meeting and drawing analogy. As an ultimate result of the influences of the three elements, the creation by the Great Purusha (God) by way of manifesting Himself as *Akasa* etc. (sky), *Savdatanmatras* (sound and its derivatives etc), *Savdadi* (word emblems), *Mahattattwa* (intellect etc), and *Ahankartattwa* (the sense of pride etc); or creation by way of incarnation in His true image these creations are dinominated as "Sarga" and creation by Brahma is known as "Bisarga." The attempts made by various objects created by glorious God in upholding their respective merits or superiority over the others is called "*Sthana*". The grace of the merciful God towards His devotees is called "Poshana." The piety of the saints so graced by the bountiful Lord is known as "Manwantara." Desire that gives birth to an action is called "Uti." The discourses on His incarnations and also relating to the meritorious acts of His devotees are called "Ishanukatha." Such discourses are abundantly full of stories and anecdotes. (1-5).

The Lord Sri Hari remaining asleep in self-communion, the dissolution and merging in of *Jivas* (individual beings) with His divine energies is known as "Nirodha." The existence of the Soul in its native form after the renouncement by it of all other forms as assumed through illusions is called "Mukti." He is known as "Asraya", from whom proceeds the creation, destruction and manifestation of the Universe, and who is called Para-Bramhan and Paramatma. O King! The *Addhyatmika* (spiritual) Purusha is the same as the *Adhidaibika* (divine) one. Besides the above two, the

Adhibhautika (pertaining to elements) form also is called such a Purusha (great soul). We cannot conceive of any one of these three with the exclusion of the other two; and it is the great soul only who beholds any one or all three of them at a time as a witness keeping Himself aloof from them. And such a great soul is called "Asraya". It has no support of any shape. On issuing out of the mundane egg, that Great Purusha began to think of having for Himself a habitation. As a result of the desire and in accordance with His native purity, He created pure water. A name of that Great Purusha is Nara. As the water originated from that Nara (water), His *ayana* (abode or place of habitation) was named *Narayana*. Objects, actions, time, nature, and *Jiva* are performing their respective functions due to His merey. Without His merey these will cease to so perform their functions and altogether cease to exist. (6—12).

"O King! The One all-powerful *Parameswara* (God) being desirous of assuming various forms of objects, left the seat of His meditation in yoga and divided the abode of origin, the womb into three divisions, namely, *Aahidaiba* (divine), *Adhyatma* (Spiritual), and *Adhibhautika* (elemental). As a result of the exertion of the Great Purusha in diverse ways, there arose in the sphere (*Akasa*) within Him three energies viz- *Ojas* (vitality), *Sahas* (patience of mind) and *Bala* (Strength of body). From those subtle sources of energies originated the principal consciousness (Prana) known as the *Sutra* (the thread of all vital energies). Prana, the consciousness, when engaged in any activity, the senses follow it, as servants do to their master. Likewise the senses cease to act on the cessation of the Prana from action. With the exertion of this Prana, thirst and hunger arise in the Lord (the Great Purusha). With such desire for drinking and eating having arisen, His mouth opened. From the mouth originated the palate, the tongue and the tastes. The tastes are enjoyed by the tongue. (13-18.)

“Thereafter, with the desire of the Great Purusha for speaking, the organ of speech and its presiding deity the God of fire also originated from His mouth. When the Great Purusha was asleep on the bed of water, both His organ of speech and its presiding deity were shut up for so many long years. Similarly with the great exertion of the vital air, His two nostrils were formed. Thereafter with His desire for smelling, grew the nose, the organ of smelling and its presiding deity, the God of Air (*Baiyu*). O King ! At the beginning the whole universe was without Jivas, who then existed in unmanifested state within the Great Purusha. With His desire to behold His own form and also other variety of objects, His two eyes, the organ of vision, and the presiding deity thereof the *Jyoti* or sun were formed, thereupon he was able to see forms. When the Rishis intended to address an invocation to the Great Purusha with the chanting of the vedic hymns and the Great Purusha having desired to hear the invocation so addressed, His two ears, the organ of hearing with its presiding deity the quarters came into existence. Thereupon He was able to hear words or sound. Thereafter with His desire for enjoying softness, hardness, lightness, heaviness, heat and coldness of various objects, His skin, the organ of touch with its presiding deity were formed. Thereupon air coming in contact with the skin both from within and without the skin was able to perceive all things by touch. When the Great Purusha became desirous of performing many actions, His two hands, the organ of strength and the presiding deity Indra were formed. The functions of the hands consist in taking. Thus when He desired to move about, His two legs were formed. The Lord Vishnu, who is at one with sacrifices, Himself is the presiding deity of the two legs. Men do perform sacrifices by virtue of the power of moving on the legs. (19-25).

When the Lord became desirous of having offspring

and enjoying women and heaven etc there came into existence His organ of generation and its presiding deity patriarch Brahma. The functions of the presiding deity are the organ of generation and the pleasure consequent upon sexual intercourse. Similarly when the Lord desired to throw off the refuses of food, His rectum, the organ of excretion and its presiding deity Mitra came into being whose function consisted in excreting the rejected portion of the food. When the Lord became desirous of migrating from one body to another, His navel, *Apana* (one of the five vital airs) and death came into existence. On the separation of the two airs *Prana* and *Apana* from each other at the navel, death takes place. Thus, the Lord desiring taste, food, and drink, His belly, entrails and intestine were produced. The river is the presiding deity of the entrails and the ocean that of the intestine. Satisfaction and nutrition depend upon the entrail and the intestine. When the Great Purusha became desirous of meditating upon His own illusions, the heart, mind, determination and desire came into existence with their presiding deity the Moon. (26-30).

Thereafter the thick and thin skin, flesh, blood, marrow fat, and bone etc the seven components of body came into being from earth, water and energy. The air *Prana* is the outcome of sky, water and air. The nature of the senses are inclined towards the worldly objects, and the sound and the other objects are the outcome of the *Bhutas* (the attribute of pride) and are apparently well manifest. As a matter of fact, however, they are not truly manifested inasmuch as the mind is the soul of all manifestations, and intellect (*Buddhi*) is identical with true knowledge (*Bijnana*). O king ! Thus I have related to thee fully the components of the gross (corporeal) body of the God. The corporeal body of the Great Purusha is covered by eight coatings viz. Nature (*Prakriti*), intellect (*Buddhi*), pride and the five elements. Besides the gross body, the Lord

has the subtle body which is unspeakable, attributeless, without origin, existence and cessation, eternal, indescribable and incomprehensible. (31-34).

O King ! I have thus described unto thee both the forms, of the Lord's body. But the learned ones do not admit any of the two forms, inasmuch as both of them are manifestation or creation of illusions (*Maya*). The Lord has Himself assumed the form of Bramhan and identifies Himself with the names of objects and the forms thereof and actions. In reality the Great Purusha is the one ultimate and above actions,—but He brings about the actions through His association with *Maya* (illusion). The Lord has created the Prajapatis (the Patriarch), Manu, celestial gods, Rishis, Pitris (the Manes), Siddha, Charana, Gandharva Vidyadhara, Asura (Demons), Yaksha, Kinnara, Apsara Naga, Serpent, Kimpurusas, Naras (men), Matris (the mothers), Rakshasa, Pisacha, Bhuta, Preta, Vinayaka, Kusmandaka, Maniacs, Betalas, Jatudhana, Planets, deers, birds, beasts, trees, mountains and reptiles etc, and both the *Bhutas* viz the mobiles and immobiles ; those born of wombs and eggs ; the four kinds of Bhutas such as are outcome of perspiration etc ; those living in water, the sky and the earth have all originated from the Lord Himself. 35-40.

O King ! Every action has three ultimate courses. In accordance with this from *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* have been created respectively the gods, the men and the creatures of the hell. Each of the above three qualities again admits of three divisions, namely, good, medium and low, mixed as they become in proportion with the other two. The Great Purusha assumes Himself as men, gods birds and beasts and preserves them in the form of virtue. And the end approaching. He assumes Himself as Rudra the destructive fire, and destroys all created beings of the universe as the wind destroys the clouds. O. King ! Thus I have described unto thee the

greatest of the gods. But they would not take the Great Purāṣha in the Vedas (Srutis) do not admit the instrumental *Parameswara* (God) in the work of creation, inasmuch as the universe, according to them, is but the creation of illusions (41-46)

O King ! I have in this way described unto thee, the main and the intermediate creations of Bramha by way of examples. The creations of natural objects in the Great Kalpa and the artificial objects in the intermediate Kalpas are identical. O Maharaj ! I shall hereafter describe the gross and subtle extent of time, and the characteristics and divisions of the Kalpas. Do thee hear me relate to thee now the description of the Padma-Kalpa."

Saunaka, at this stage, said,—“O Suta ! You told us that Vidura—the best of the devotees of God—had severed all unseverable attachments of the dear relations and had travelled over all holy places of the world and he had at that time discussion with Maitreya regarding spiritual subject. Relate thou to us now all that Maitreya had said in reply to the queries of *Khatta* (Vidura). Do thou relate to us also the great endeavours that Vidura made for renouncing the affections of his friend and relations, and also the way of his return amidst them."

Suta said,—“Bramhan ! I shall now relate to you exactly as the Mahamuni (the great amongst the *Munis*, saints) Suka had done in reply to the King Parikshit's question, and do thee listen to me."

END OF BOOK II.
